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ABSTRACT

Key findings are presented from a survey conducted by the California Research Bureau showing that most California school districts incorporate violence prevention program curricula with a strong police and security presence. Many schools have installed closed circuit video surveillance cameras, canine searches, and metal detectors. Unfortunately, the vast majority of schools who actively use violence prevention and anti-drug use curricula are unable to directly measure the impact or effectiveness of these programs on reducing violence and drug use among students. Many small schools rely on school staff, teachers, and volunteers to provide supervision and security during school hours. Few California schools have brought together the key elements of students, parents, and civic and public officials to formulate a community response to school violence. While there are nearly 13,000 part-time and full-time school district personnel providing security in California K-12 schools, few are trained or certified in these types of jobs. By contrast, the state's largest school districts have their own police forces. Only 10 percent of medium-sized districts and fewer smaller districts have a dedicated school police force. A substantial number of school districts have agreements and contracts with municipal police or local law enforcement agencies. An appendix provides the survey questionnaire. (GR)

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Security and Crime Prevention Strategies in California Public Schools

By Marcus Nieto

Prepared at the Request of

Senator Dede Alpert, Chair, Senate Education Committee

*Senator Teresa Hughes, Chair, Senate Select Committee
on School Safety*

OCTOBER 1999

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*"The progress of a state may be measured by the extent to which it safeguards the rights of children."*¹ G. Abbott

Senator Hughes and Senator Alpert requested that the California Research Bureau (CRB) conduct a survey of school security policies and practices of a representative sample of California school districts. This survey represents the first attempt to assess the security measures and crime prevention resources used by school districts in California. Subsequent events, such as the Columbine High School tragedy, have keenly focused public attention on the issue of safety in public schools.

The CRB survey finds that school districts in California generally respond to school violence in two distinct ways. The most common approach is through *violence prevention* curricula whereby individual one-on-one violence and aggressive behavior is addressed through counseling, life skills building, peer mediation and conflict resolution. The other, but less common approach, is to make it physically difficult for terrorist acts to occur on school campuses by using a combination of highly visible security personnel along with detection technologies such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras, and more conventional security measures such as canine searches, locks, and metal bars. Few school districts are prepared to deal with a catastrophic event, such as the taking of hostages or a tragedy such as that at Columbine.

Key findings from the CRB survey of interest to policymakers include:

- Most of the largest school districts (more than 22,000 students) in California combine violence prevention program curricula with a strong police and security presence. In contrast, many of the state's smallest school districts (less than 1,000 students) do not have a visible law enforcement presence on school campuses and do not see a need to have one.
- Many school districts in the state are incorporating the use of closed circuit video surveillance cameras (CCTV), canine searches, and metal detectors into their school safety programs.
- The vast majority of school districts actively use violence prevention and anti-drug use curricula, but are unable to directly measure the impact or effectiveness of the curricula on reducing violence and drug use among students. National studies suggest wide variation in effectiveness.
- Many small school districts (under 5,000 students) and elementary and middle schools in some average size school districts (less than 22,000 students) rely primarily upon school staff, teachers and volunteers to provide supervision and security during school hours.

The involvement of students, parents and a broad range of civic and public officials in violence prevention planning and implementation is key to an effective program, according

to the research literature. Few California school districts have brought together these kinds of resources at the local level to formulate a community response. For example, the CRB study found that:

- Local judges are not involved in violence prevention planning at the school or school district level even though they make decisions in juvenile, dependency, family and criminal courts affecting school-age children.
- Schools do not have access to data to track individuals and families involved in the judicial system so as to improve the focus of services provided by the school.
- School safety plans do not include a full range of security issues, but instead focus primarily on data collection of school-related crime, emergency procedures, dress codes, and harassment policies, as currently required by state law (*Education Code, Section 35294.1 et seq.*).
- Schools may not have adequate data about youth drug use and violence in the community to formulate an effective response.

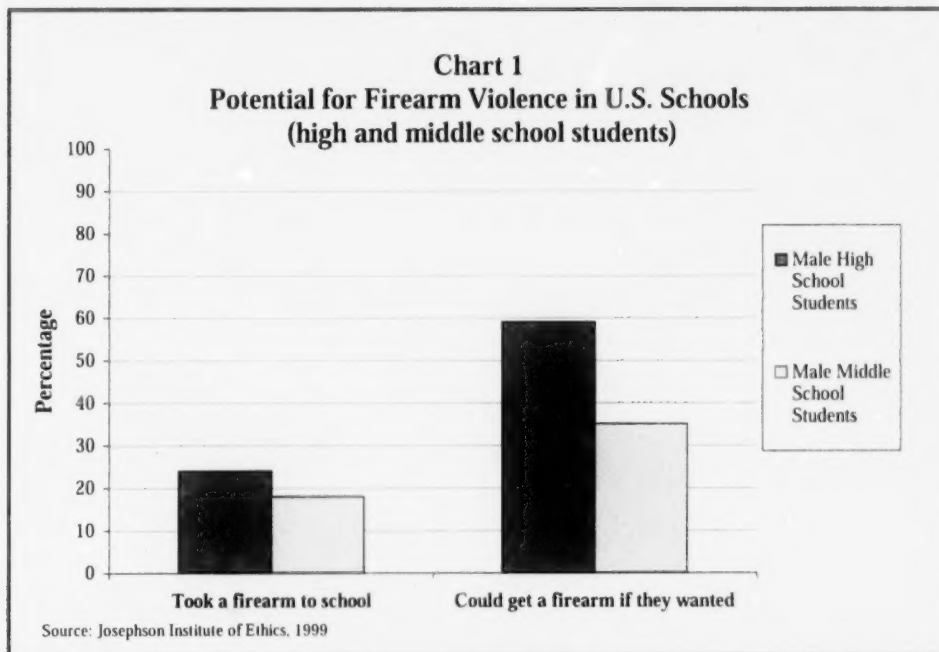
The survey found a wide range of professionalism in school security. Nearly 13,000 part-time and full-time school district personnel provide security in California's K-12 schools. However, a substantial number of these personnel are not trained nor certified to perform safety nor security-related work. Most are teachers, staff or volunteers. In contrast, around half of the state's largest school districts (student population of over 22,000) have their own police forces. Only ten percent of medium-sized districts (student population 5,000 to 21,999) and very few smaller districts (student population under 5,000) have a dedicated school police force. A substantial number of school districts have agreements and contracts with municipal police or other local law enforcement agencies for security: more than 900 municipal police officers provide security at K-12 school districts.

Finally, survey findings and the evaluation literature raise important policy questions about the effectiveness of the violence and drug prevention programs used by school districts. These programs receive significant public funding (nearly \$100 million in 1998/99) yet most lack any outcome data. One prominent researcher, Delbert Elliott, director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence in Colorado, contends that "we are wasting money on programs that have been demonstrated not to work."

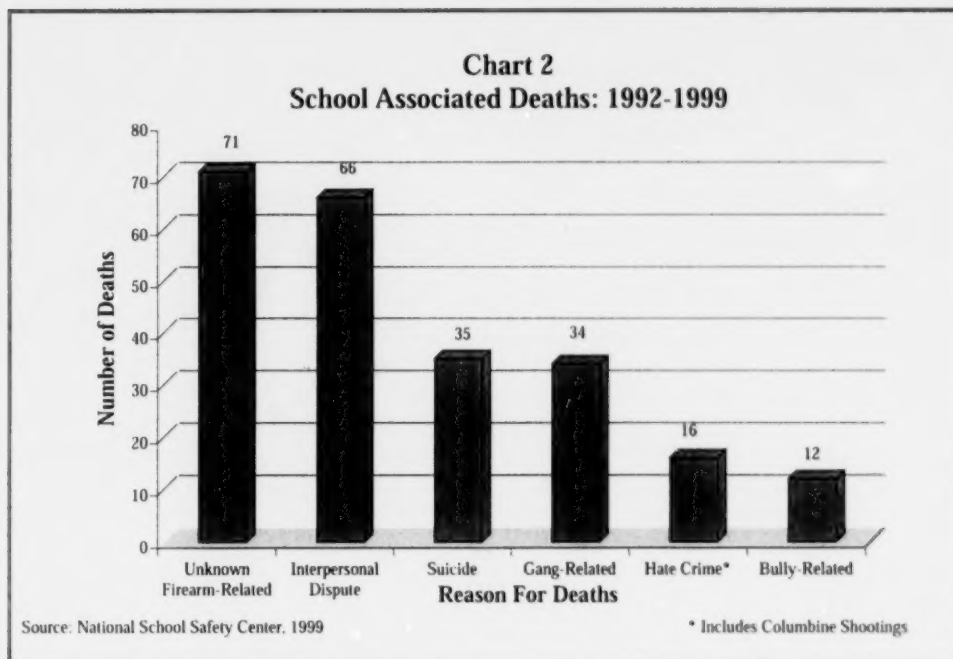
VIOLENCE IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS

School safety is a serious problem. Nearly 3 million crimes a year are committed in or near the 85,000 U.S. public schools. About one in nine public school teachers, and one in four public school students, reported being victims of violence in 1996. School crime and vandalism cost taxpayers an estimated \$200 million a year.² School violence can include gang activity, locker thefts, bullying and intimidation, gun use, assault—any activity that produces a victim.

According to a recent poll, many American teenagers believe that a shooting rampage like the one in Littleton, Colorado, could happen at their school and think they know a student who might be troubled enough to carry one out.³ About four out of ten students polled said they know students who have threatened to kill someone, but few reported the threat to school officials. A 1999 survey of male high school and middle school students by the Josephson Institute found that one in four high school students and nearly one in five middle school students carried a firearm to school in the last year. A third of the middle school students said they could get a firearm if they wanted one, as could 60 percent of high school students (Chart 1).⁴ A recently released federal study finds that while there has been a reduction in the number of high school students who reported carrying a firearm to school between 1991 and 1997, up to 60 percent still have access to firearms.⁵ From 1992 to the present, firearm-related shootings accounted for 78 percent of all school-associated homicides and suicides.⁶



Random and spontaneous acts of violence, like that which occurred at Columbine High School, instill a climate of fear in schools. But most violent school-related crimes involve an interpersonal dispute and a single offender and victim.

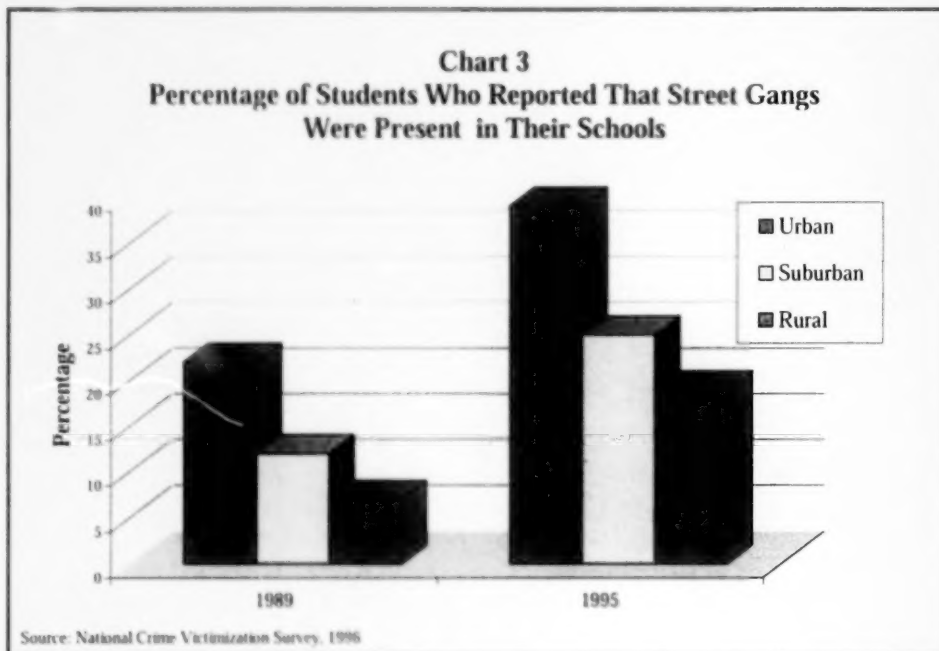


Like most learning, the earliest sources of school violence begin in the family. Children bring into the classroom their family environment, their experiences in the neighborhood, their attitudes about how to handle frustrations and discipline, and their entire socialization and view of the world. Weak parental bonding, ineffective parenting (lax monitoring, discipline, and supervision), exposure to violence in the home, and a social climate that glorifies violence put children at risk for being violent later in life.⁷ Outside of the home, school is a place where children from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds come together to spend the greater part of their day. Incidents of violence may arise due to racial tensions, cultural differences in attitudes and behavior, and neighborhood rivalries.

Once in school, peer pressure in the middle or high school is a major influence on at-risk teens, who often compete for acceptance and status among peers. Serious violence at or near schools is often associated with youths or groups of youth who may be seen as failures in school and rejected by their peers. Without intervention by parents and school, these rejected teens may form new bonds among themselves, rationalizing their disengagement from peers and fomenting anger. In communities where youth are exposed to violence through gangs and drugs, teens have a more difficult time resolving conflicts non-violently. Violence can be modeled, encouraged, and rewarded.

Violence crosses all social and economic boundaries. Gangs, drugs, weapons, and juvenile crime are increasingly present in rural, suburban, and urban communities and schools. For example, school-related multiple murders over the last two years have occurred in small, rural, and predominately white communities lacking histories of high-profile violence and high crime rates.

Gangs and drugs are important indicators of a problem. In 1995, students who reported that they had been victims of a violent crime at school were also more likely to report that drugs were available at school than students who had not (73 percent to 65 percent). Although urban students were more likely to report street gangs at their schools than were suburban or rural students, between 1989 and 1995, school gangs increased in all three residential categories (Chart 3).⁸



The 1995 National School Crime Survey found that students perceive specific areas in the school (such as entrances, hallways, or restrooms,) as unsafe. They also fear being attacked on the way to and from school. According to the survey, between 1989 and 1995, the percentage of students age 12 through 19 who reported fearing being attacked or harmed on the way to and from school, and who avoided one or more places at school, nearly doubled. In 1996, the Departments of Justice and Education found that nearly three times more nonfatal violent crimes with student victims occurred away from school than in school (255,000 incidents to 671,000 incidents).⁹

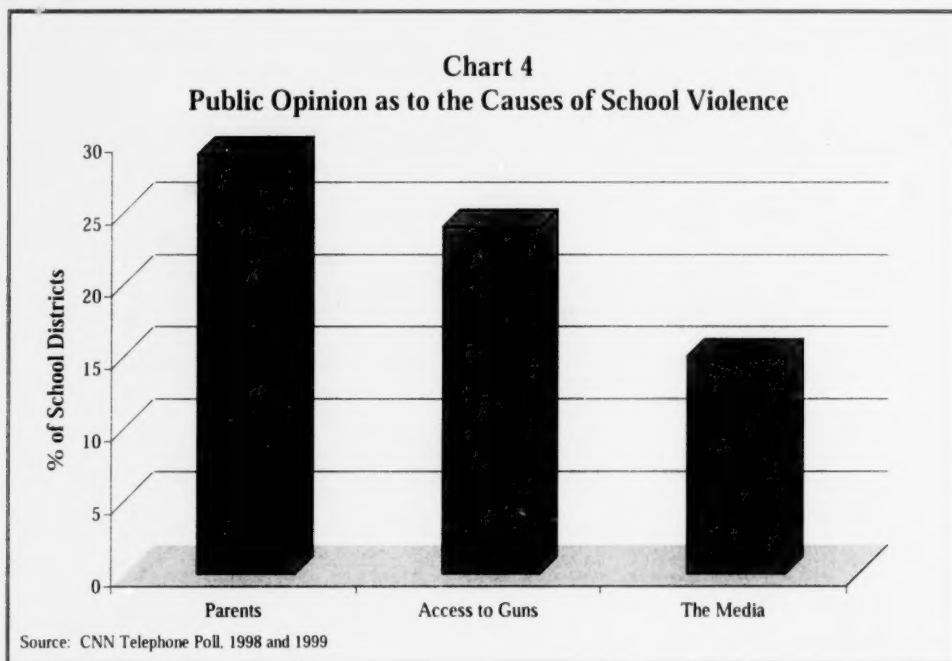
Public Opinion About the Causes of Youth Violence

Even though school violence has been a concern for many years, there are different perspectives about its causes. For example, the public and the education community sometimes view school violence differently. With frequent news stories about student violence, the public may feel that schools are not doing their part to stop violence. On the other hand, many educators do not see schools as violent places, but rather as places where students congregate and bring community and family problems that might erupt into violence. In a 1998 Gallop poll survey, when respondents were asked the major problems

facing public schools, the top three answers were "lack of discipline by schools," "violence/fighting," and "drug use." In contrast, a 1998 survey of school district administrators ranked the most serious problems facing school principals as student tardiness (41 percent), absenteeism/cutting class (25 percent), and physical conflicts among students (21 percent). In responding to student behavioral problems, school districts suspended students for more than five days (49 percent of the time), expelled students (31 percent of the time), or transferred students to alternative schools/programs (20 percent of the time).¹⁰

Some commentators assert that young people's failure to learn fundamental moral values is one reason for school violence, while others see glorified violence in the culture as a contributing factor. According to a 1999 national survey of parents and teens, only 37 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that today's children will grow up to make America a better place. The same poll found the public disturbed by the lack of values such as honesty, civility and responsibility in America's youth.¹¹

According to a 1999 *NEWSWEEK* poll, 90 percent of Americans believe that parents today do not spend as much time with their teenagers as they should, and over 40 percent believe that baby boomers do not provide enough guidance to give their teens a strong base.¹² In a CNN media poll conducted after the Jonesboro and Columbine tragedies, the top three responses to "who or what is most responsible for school violence," were parents, access to guns, and the media (see Chart 4).



Contemporary Approaches to School Safety

According to researchers, two common community responses occur after every high-profile case of school violence:

- "We never thought it could happen here."
- "There is nothing you can do to prepare for such incidents."

Some parents and students have responded to school safety concerns by moving to home schooling. In the last two years, home schooling has increased from 700,000 to 1.5 million school-age children. According to Brian Ray, President of the National Home Education Research Institute, "In the last couple of years we are seeing more parents concerned with safety at schools whether its violence, drugs, or psychological and emotional safety."¹³

Some schools have developed comprehensive school safety plans that incorporate effective, research-based programs and strategies, zero-tolerance policies for drugs and weapons, and community collaboration. The goal of such plans is to create and maintain a positive and welcoming school climate, free of drugs, violence, and intimidation, in which teachers can teach and students can learn. According to national school security experts, there are three basic elements for establishing an effective school safety policy:¹⁴

- Improving data collection to measure the extent of the problem. Schools and communities cannot develop effective strategies, nor allocate prevention resources effectively, without a thorough understanding of the nature and extent of youth drug use and violence in the community.
- Involving community and local organizations in the development and implementation of school safety plans. Active participation from parents, teachers, students, law enforcement officers, elected officials and business leaders is crucial.
- Using a variety of crime prevention programs or strategies to effectively meet the needs of all students. Successful school safety plans involve a variety of broad-based strategies, policies, and programs that focus on improving the overall quality of the school environment.

According to *TIME* magazine, hand-held metal detectors, the adoption of school uniforms or clothing restrictions, surveillance cameras, and panic alarms have become common policies for schools since the school violence in Jonesboro and Littleton.¹⁵ One Maryland county school district has installed a sophisticated \$685,000 camera surveillance system in all 23 high schools, issued student identification cards, stationed uniformed police officers on campuses and created back door exits for administrative offices. "I never thought in my career I would recommend electronic cameras in schools. But we've never had anything like this before in America," said Superintendent Paul Vance, of Montgomery School District.¹⁶ A Connecticut school district stations plain-clothes guards at all school campuses and armed police at school entrances, and has teams of counselors looking for warning signs among troubled students. In Indiana, the state superintendent and department of education collaborated with Indianapolis law enforcement to stage a mock

school hostage simulation.^{*} Nonetheless, many school districts are unprepared to deal with an event of random violence such as at Jonesboro or Columbine, according to the National School Board Association's school security expert.¹⁷

Some school safety experts are calling for the use of telephones in each classroom, a cell phone for each school, breathalyzers in each high school, and surveillance cameras in school areas that are security risks.¹⁸ Several states have created anonymous toll-free telephone hot lines or internet sites for persons to report students with guns and weapons on school campuses. Several state attorneys general have established school safety task force web sites that update current and proposed state laws pertaining to school safety and crisis preparation.

However, the most common violence-prevention measures are relatively inexpensive. A 1998 study found that the direct prevention plan most commonly reported by school district administrators includes placing teachers in hallways, grouping troubled students in alternative schools, and requiring visitor registration.¹⁹

Selected School Drug and Crime Prevention Funding Programs

There are a number of school violence prevention programs. Although much emphasis has been placed on drug prevention funding, violence prevention programs have had the most success. Some focus on individual children who are identified by teachers or peers as aggressive or at risk for school failure. These programs strive to increase student social competence and to reduce aggressive behavior. Another set of programs focuses on family risk by working with parents, peers, and community members. Other programs attempt to change the school environment. Still others believe the best way to address the school violence issue is to focus on legal reform, including federal civil rights legislation to establish the rights of children to attend schools which are, safe, secure and peaceful.²⁰

State legislatures have recently enacted legislation improving the access of schools to juvenile justice information and records for schools and juvenile justice agencies, increasing security on school grounds, and enacting tough penalties for serious juvenile felons. The federal government has spent nearly \$6 billion since 1985 on school drug and alcohol prevention programs. A number of states, including California, Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, Oklahoma and Utah, have established community-based violence prevention programs that involve public schools as partners with other agencies and organizations, such as law enforcement and nonprofits. However, many of these programs do not have a consistent long-time funding base. Others, such as some drug prevention programs, are not rated effective by program evaluations.²¹

Federal and state grant funds are available to school districts for crime prevention programs. In California, school districts generally rely on federal formula grant programs such as *Title IV* and federal and state discretionary grants to pay for drug and violence

^{*}Many of the lessons learned from this exercise are available in a training video and regional training workshop on school security and crisis preparedness sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education. The training video is entitled, "Youth Crisis Planning and Response to Hostage Taking in Schools."

prevention efforts. Formula grants, which are allocated according to population, give schools and school districts wide latitude on how to use the funds. Discretionary grants must be applied for and usually have specified criteria that restrict the use of the funds. Schools and districts often piece these funding grants together along with general funds to meet their most pressing crime prevention needs. Most grant programs do not require schools and districts to evaluate or compile data on the outcome of the programs or their effect on student behavior.

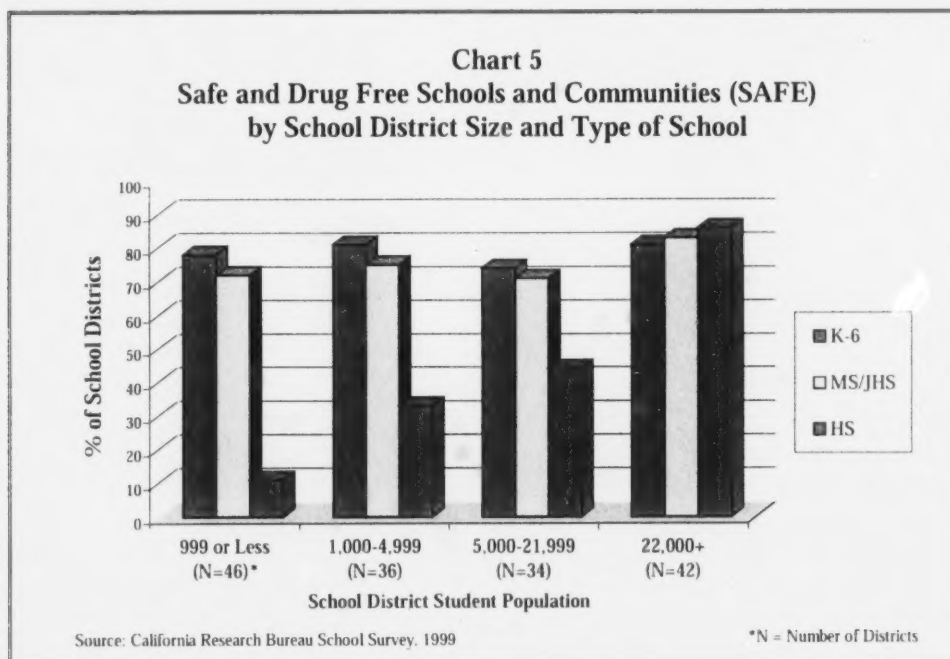
Table 1 Partial List of Federal and State Expenditures for School-Based Violence and Drug Prevention Programs in California			
Funding Program	Agency	FY 1999/2000 Funding for California	Strategy
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (Title IV)	U.S. Department of Education	\$59.5 million (formula)	School staff training and curriculum development
School Policing and Partnership Act	Calif. Departments of Justice and Education	\$3 million (discretionary)	Police and community agency collaboration
Conflict Resolution and Youth Mediation Program	Calif. Department of Education	\$.9 million (discretionary)	School violence prevention
21 st Century Community Learning Center Programs	U.S. Department of Education	\$24.6 million (discretionary)	School district curriculum development for reentering students
High Risk Education and Public Safety	Calif. Department of Education	\$18 million (discretionary)	School program development for reentering at-risk students
Gang Risk Intervention Program	Calif. Departments of Justice and Education	\$3 million (discretionary)	County Education departments and local law enforcement
Gang Crime and Violence Prevention Partnership Program	Calif. Department of Justice	\$3 million (discretionary)	Police and community agency collaboration
After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program	U.S. Department of Education	\$50 million (discretionary)	Schools, community agencies, elected officials, and parent collaboration

Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 (Title IV)

This federally-funded formula grant program is used by school districts as they deem appropriate to provide instruction, student counseling, teachers and staff training, before- and after-school programs and community service, and violence prevention curriculum development and acquisition. It is also used to fund Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), a well-known prevention program, and red-ribbon week. Program flexibility also allows school districts to spend up to 20 percent of their annual allotment for safety measures such as installing metal detectors and hiring security personnel. While California school districts are not required to report to the Department of Education on how the funds are spent, in FY 1998/99 they were required to spend the funds on "research-based" strategies. California school districts received \$59.5 million (or about \$4.83 per student) in FY 1998/99. In FY 1999/00, school districts in California will receive \$49.4 million (or about \$4.02 per student).

The CRB school survey found that school districts of all sizes around the state use these funds for drug prevention programs. However, fewer high schools in small- and medium-

sized school districts receive these funds (see Chart 5, page 10). One small school district reported receiving less than \$100 in FY 1997/98, so the district placed it on reserve until there was enough to accomplish something meaningful.²² Some small and rural school district officials indicate that drug abuse is not an issue in their schools, which may in part explain why they participate less in SAFE.



School Policing and Partnership Act of 1998 (Intervention-based)

This state-funded discretionary grant program is available to schools and school districts to form partnerships with law enforcement and community agencies to prevent crime and violence in schools (*AB 1756, Chapter 317, Statutes of 1998*). According to a survey by the California Department of Justice, 67 percent of school districts have school safety teams that include school site staff, law enforcement, and probation officers. In addition, 40 percent of these school districts include community representatives and volunteers in their partnerships.²³ The state allocated \$3 million for the program in FY 1999/2000.

Conflict Resolution and Youth Mediation Grants

This state Department of Education program provides discretionary grant funds to schools and school district to implement a variety of school violence reduction programs and strategies to address identified local needs. The mini grants are administered through County Offices of Education. The state Fiscal Year 1998/99 budget allocated \$280,000 for conflict resolution program grants and \$625,000 for community policing and partnership grants.

High-Risk Youth Education and Public Safety

This state Department of Education program provides \$19 million for two five-year discretionary grant programs to school districts and county offices of education to help at-risk youth leaving a county or state juvenile justice facility with the necessary resources to reenter school. The program requires close collaboration between the school district, the school, county probation, and the family to provide structured 8-12 hours per day programming for the student. According to the Department of Education, 19 school districts receive funding for the program in FY 1999/2000.

The 21st Century Community Learning Center Program.

This U.S. Department of Education grant program provides expanded learning opportunities for participating children in a safe, drug-free and supervised environment. Grantees are free to design their own programs to meet their after-school needs. Three-year demonstration grants are administered by schools or school districts. In FY 1998/99, \$200 million was available nationally for demonstration grants. In California, 59 schools or school districts received \$24.6 million for their projects. This amounts to 12 percent of the available federal funds, although California has 15 percent of the nation's school-age population. It is anticipated that as much as \$600 million will be available nationally for FY 1999/2000.

Gang Risk Intervention Program (GRIP)

This state discretionary grant program (\$3 million annually) is administered by the Department of Justice through County Offices of Education, with the goal of keeping gangs out of schools by involving parents, teachers, school administrators, nonprofit community organizations, and gang experts in the decision-making process. School districts with GRIP programs provide counseling for students, connect students to positive sports and cultural activities, provide job training to students (including apprenticeship programs and career exploration in the community), and create opportunities for youth to have positive interactions with law enforcement officers. In FY 1999/2000, thirty school programs received \$3 million.

Gang Crime and Violence Prevention Partnership Program

This discretionary grant program is administered by the California Department of Justice and is designed to assist schools, parents, community groups and law enforcement agencies by providing basic information and innovative strategies to help prevent youth from joining gangs. About \$3 million annually is available to community-based organizations and non-profits that are working in partnership with schools and/or law enforcement.

After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program.

This state funded multi-purpose discretionary grant program is targeted at schools that are successful at building broad-based support from local neighborhoods, parents, community

groups, local elected officials, and churches to help students with their after school academic and recreational needs. The Department of Education is responsible for awarding grants to school sites that demonstrate a need for these services and the capacity to bring together diverse local community groups that are committed to the program. School districts in Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Diego counties (START, BEST, and Critical Hours Programs) are considered by the Department of Education to have model programs. In FY 1999/2000, \$50 million was available. Schools had to match the awarded grants on a dollar per dollar basis.

BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS IN CALIFORNIA

In the spring of 1974, the Attorney General and the Superintendent of Public Education convened an Ad Hoc Task Force on "Management of Conflict and Crime in Schools." The catalyst was concern about gang involvement on school campuses, increasing acts of violence and assault, and general problems of discipline and control, especially in Los Angeles schools. The Task Force concluded that there was very little coordination between school and criminal justice officials, prevention efforts and crisis planning were non-existent, and that reporting of school-related crime was poor, not uniformly coded, and lacked a statewide mandate.²⁴

In 1980, Attorney General George Deukmejian filed a unique civil action in Los Angeles Superior Court (*Civil No. 64340*). The action sought to clarify the law regarding both the constitutional rights of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) school children, and the duties of various defendants including the city council, board of supervisors, district attorney, police department and sheriff's department to eliminate or reduce school violence. The civil action, entitled *A Lawsuit to Restore Safety in the Schools*, contended that:

Children are being compelled to attend schools where conditions exist which adults would never tolerate in places of work. Adults can speak and act for our children who cannot speak and act for themselves. Students should be able to attend school without fear of being subject to physical violence.*

The lawsuit was dismissed in Los Angeles Superior Court on the grounds that the State had no right to file an action against a local government entity.[†]

The *School Attendance Improvement Act of 1980* funded 32 school districts in a pilot program to reduce truancy, improve attendance through rewards, train teachers and counselors in new discipline strategies, and allow police on campus.²⁵ (Outcome information on the success or failure of this pilot project is not available.) In 1982, the people voted to add Article 1, Section 28(a) and 28(c), to the California Constitution, establishing the inalienable constitutional right to safe, secure and peaceful schools. In 1984, the legislature enacted a new uniformed state school crime reporting structure (*Penal Code, Section 628 et seq.*). Legislation was also enacted giving law enforcement leeway to pursue and investigate juvenile crime on campus (*Welfare and Institution Code, Section 625 and 625.1*). More recent legislation authorizes three-year demonstration grants to school districts to prevent truancy, antisocial behavior, and delinquency (*Chapter 200, Statutes of 1997*).

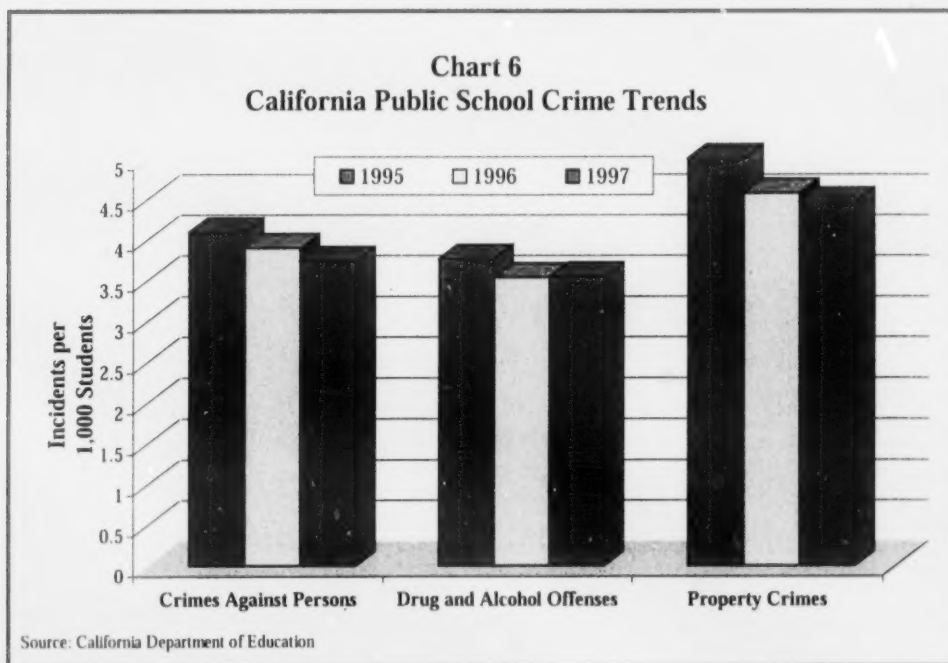
*Attorney General George Deukmejian, "A Lawsuit to Restore Safety in the Schools," *Campus Strife, The Educator's Crime Prevention Quarterly*, California Department of Justice, 1980/81

† This decision was appealed to the State Appellate Court where it was upheld shortly after in a non-published decision (Civil No. 64341).

California was one of the first states in the nation to mandate the collection of uniform crime data on school crime. However, the collection process was neither consistent school-to-school or district-to-district, according to the Department of Education. Many school districts did not systematically collect data nor have reliable computerized systems. Some school districts initiated zero tolerance policies that led to increased reporting of school crime incidents, while other districts remained more tolerant of such incidents and did not report them. These factors led to an "over- and under-reporting" problem that damaged the reputation of some schools and affected the willingness of others to report crime data. As a result, the school crime reporting system was temporarily suspended in 1993 until a more reliable system could be developed.²⁶

The *California Safe Schools Assessment* became law in 1995, requiring all school districts to report incidence of school crime under a new and uniform reporting structure (*Penal Code Section 628 et seq.*). Unlike previous years when school crime data was not uniformly reported or audited, the new system requires a management team from several different state and private agencies to audit and cross-check data submitted by schools and school districts. This process assures to a certain degree that schools and school districts are interpreting and reporting school crime in the same manner.

Chart 6 reports data over a three-year period from California schools, drawn from the improved reporting structure. There have been significant reductions in crimes against persons and property, but not in drug and alcohol offenses.



Safe School Plan Development in California School Districts

California schools are required to have a safe school plan completed by September 1998 (*Education Code, Section 35294.1 et seq.*), although small school districts (under 2,500 students) can develop a district-wide plan. School site councils (*Education Code Section 52853*) are responsible for developing the safe school plans. Schools are generally required to include the following in the plan:

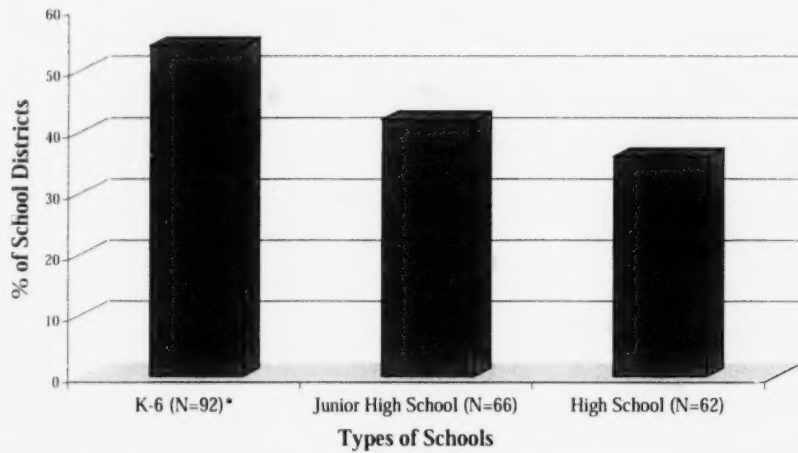
- A process to assess school-related crime.
- Strategies to help ensure school safety such as routine and emergency disaster procedures, child abuse reporting, and policies to notify teachers about students who commit serious acts that require expulsion or suspension from school.
- A sexual harassment policy.
- A dress code policy that bans apparel that could threaten the health and safety of the student body.

Schools could include the local school site council's recommendations in the safety plan, and were required to use the School/Law Enforcement Partnership publication *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action* as a resource. Schools were prohibited from contracting with private consultants to develop their plans. The *Safe Schools Plan* law is scheduled to expire on January 1, 2000. Legislation (*SB 334*) has been passed to make the requirement permanent, including yearly updating. The CRB school survey found that all school districts have completed a school safety plan as required. However, many schools have not incorporated crisis management planning (responding to a terrorist act such as that at Columbine High School) into school safety plans. This is not currently a requirement of school safety plans.

According to judges interviewed for this report, the judiciary has been largely absent from the discussion and development of school safety plans. They believe that family, juvenile, dependency, and criminal courts and their administrative adjuncts could be important elements in promoting and preserving safe schools and should be part of the community planning process. A key is how to identify "at-risk" students. Recently enacted legislation (*AB 1366*) requires that teachers and counselors undergo training to identify at-risk students for counseling. On the other hand, "confidentiality and privacy laws" make it difficult for county social service agencies to share information with school districts about troubled young people and their families.²⁷ Judges can facilitate information sharing between county, school and criminal justice institutions to improve protection for children, school staff and the public.²⁸

Schools are also required to evaluate and amend their safety plans no less than once a year to ensure that they are updated and properly implemented. The CRB school survey found that many school districts in the state have not yet undertaken school safety plan evaluations, as shown in Chart 7. The intention is that activities stated in a school safety plan be measured as to their success in meeting the plan's goals. While the legal requirement that school districts have a safe school plan in place sunsets January 1, 2000, the evaluation requirement does not. Therefore, schools that have not met the evaluation requirements are required to do so.

Chart 7
Number of Evaluated School Safety Plans by School Type

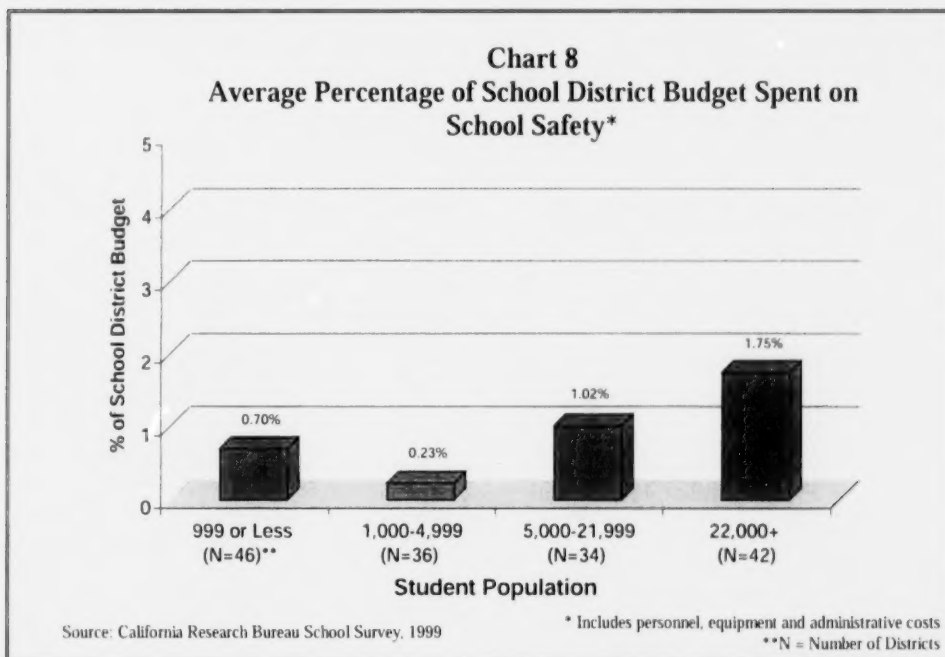


Source: California Research Bureau School Survey, 1999

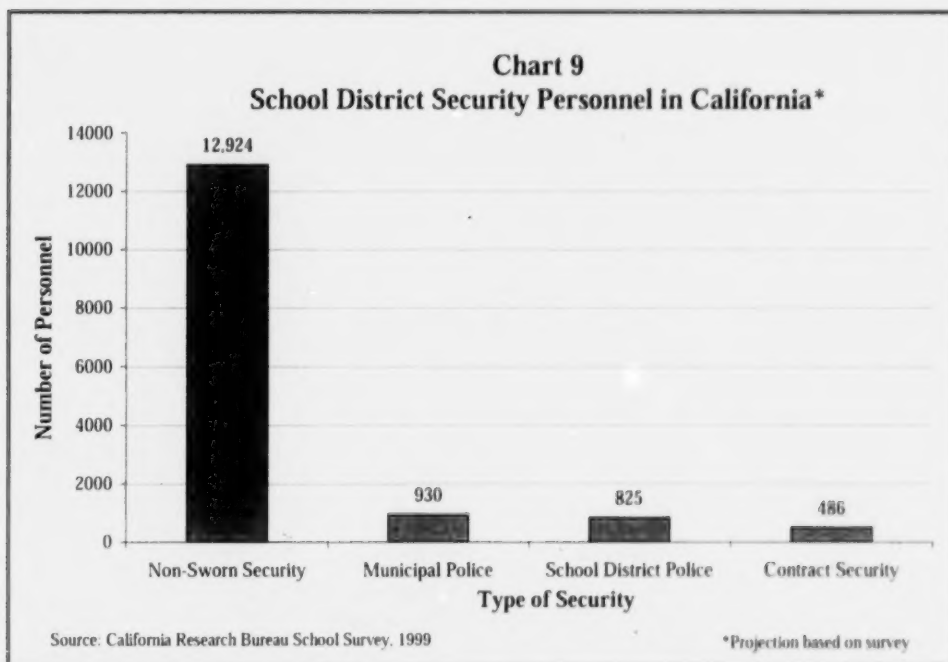
*N = Number of Districts

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL SECURITY RESOURCES

According to the CRB survey, the average school district security and safety budget is less than two percent of the total district budget, although eight districts report a higher percentage. The vast majority of small school districts report spending less than \$100,000. About a third of the largest districts, and a few of the medium-sized districts, spent more than \$1 million, while another third of school districts reported spending between \$1 million and \$500,000.



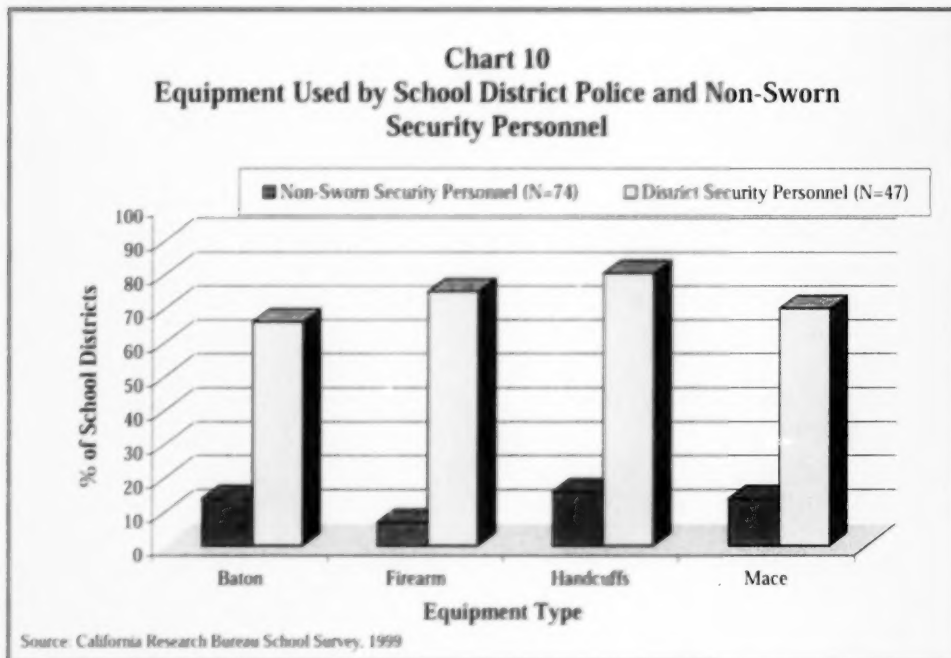
Traditionally teachers, administrators, and support staff filled the role of school security, but no longer can do both jobs adequately in many schools. The CRB survey found that most school districts in California use a combination of non-sworn in-house security (including teachers, administrators, and support staff), contract security, school police and municipal police. Maintaining a dedicated school police force requires a considerable financial commitment. Relative cost may be one factor influencing choice of security personnel (see Table 2, page 17).



Non-sworn school security and non-sworn contract security personnel also provide security services to California school districts. Included among these personnel are school faculty, other school employees and volunteers. Based on the CRB survey sample, an estimated 12,924 non-sworn security personnel provide school security services in California school districts (see Chart 9). Contract security personnel, and non-sworn security personnel employed for that purpose by California school districts, usually report to the site administrator or their designee, and receive their assignments from them as well. Their average pay range is \$8.00 per hour for part-time work to \$12.00 per hour for full-time work.

Table 2 Comparative Pay Scales for Law Enforcement Personnel Working in K-12 Schools	
Type of Agency	AVERAGE MONTHLY OR HOURLY WAGE
Municipal Police	\$4,350
Sheriffs	\$4,000
School District Police	\$3,200
Non-Sworn School and Contract Security Personnel	(\$8.00 to \$12.00 an Hour)

Source: Peace Officers Standards and Training, 1999



School district police officers (and in some cases, non-sworn security personnel) are authorized by law to carry firearms, batons, handcuffs and mace. According to the CRB survey, seven in ten school districts with district police allow their officers to carry all the safety equipment available to them, including firearms, but only one in ten districts allow contract security personnel to carry firearms (see Chart 10 above). This could reflect the uneasiness school districts and communities have about the use and presence of firearms on school campuses. For example, one large urban school district recently disallowed contracted municipal police from carrying firearms on school grounds.

School District Police

School district police are employees of the districts. Their numbers and duties vary from district to district and, in many cases, from school to school within the same district. School district police officers are authorized to carry firearms, investigate crime scenes, submit crime reports to the district attorney and juvenile courts, make arrests under certain circumstances, and obtain search warrants. Projected from findings of the CRB survey, there are about 825 school district police officers in the state.*

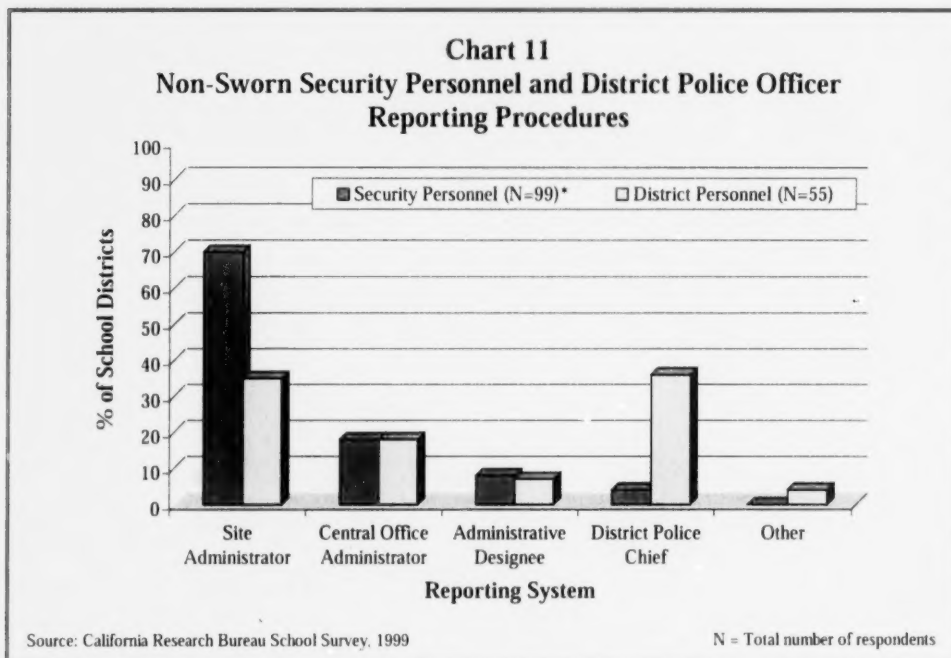
The reasons that a school district might prefer a dedicated school district police force vary, but the most important are their availability at all times to respond to a serious incident, and their familiarity with the schools and students. The CRB school survey found that less than half of the largest school districts in the state have a dedicated police force. Less than a third of school district police forces provide 24-hour security for

* Responding school districts reported 624 full time school district police, 525 municipal police, and 4,097 non-sworn security and non-security personnel. The survey sample composition is representative, allowing statewide projections.

school district property. School districts evidently place a higher priority on maintaining a daytime police presence on campuses than on protecting school property around the clock.

School principals, or their designees, are the final decision-makers for most school district police and other security personnel issues involving student discipline, investigations and other security-related decisions (see Chart 11). According to one school police officer, "It often is selective on the part of the administrator as to what gets reported, who gets involved and who gets notified. I find that a little concerning. There needs to be a written standard procedure."

About a third of school districts with a school police force maintain a traditional law enforcement chain of command reporting structure involving student crime, investigations and security issues. In these districts, there is a district-employed police chief.



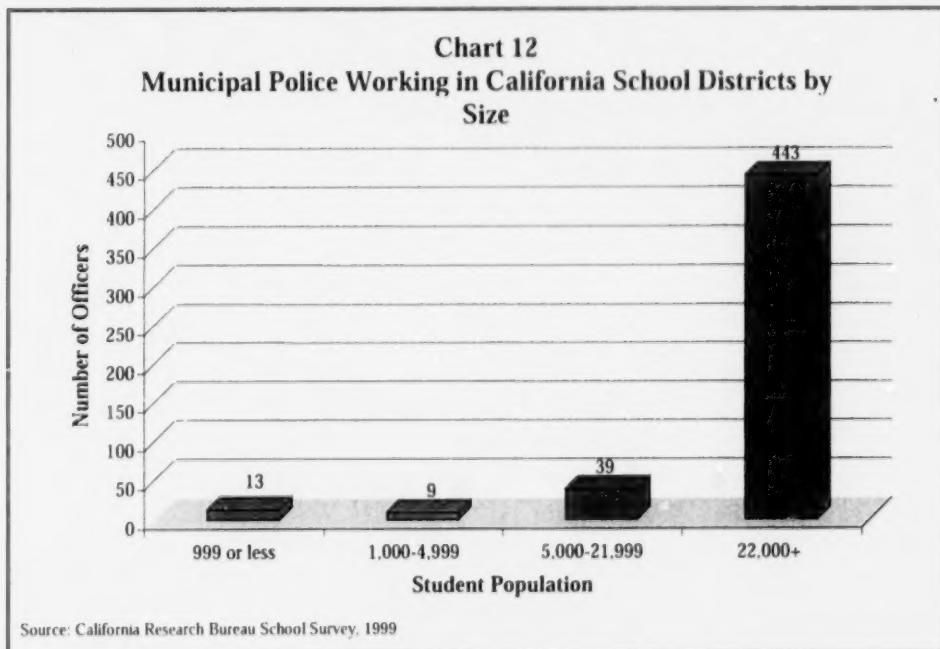
Municipal Police Officers/School Resource Officers

The CRB survey found that nearly half of all the responding large school districts and one fifth of the smaller school districts employ municipal police officers/safety resource officers (SRO) to provide security in their districts (see Chart 12). SROs are usually city or county law enforcement officers, or in some cases a probation officer, assigned by their departments to work in the schools within their jurisdiction. According to the CRB survey, over 500 municipal police officers/SROs provide security and resources in 54 of the responding school districts, which projects to approximately 930 officers working in school districts across the state.

For many school districts, the advantages of contracting for municipal police are that they are fully sworn officers with police authority and street experience to enforce the law on campus, and have the training to provide anti-drug education and student counseling. Students from urban communities respect the difference between city police and any other kind of officer.²⁹ According to one school district superintendent, "there's an instant respect factor for municipal police on school campuses." Some large school districts are considering replacing their dedicated school police forces with municipal police officers from local jurisdictions, according to survey responses. Municipal police are an expensive option, earning an average monthly salary of \$4,350, according to the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST).

A substantial number of municipal police officers employed by school districts are funded with federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grants which will expire before FY 2001, unless Congress authorizes additional funding.³⁰ Whether school districts continue to employ municipal police officers for security on school campuses after local COPS grants expire could be a key policy concern for local public officials.

Several school districts also employ county probation officers at high school and middle school campuses to work with selected at-risk students and to provide information and counseling to others. Fresno School District has been the leader in this innovative approach. In 1994, the district established a partnership with the city police and county probation departments to bring officers onto school campuses. Students who commit minor misdemeanors, either on- or off-campus, must complete a six-month contract with a probation officer who monitors their school progress and daily activities. School caseloads for probation officers can range from 50 to 100 students. Together with the municipal police officers who are also assigned to school campuses, they form a unique school safety partnership in the Fresno School District.

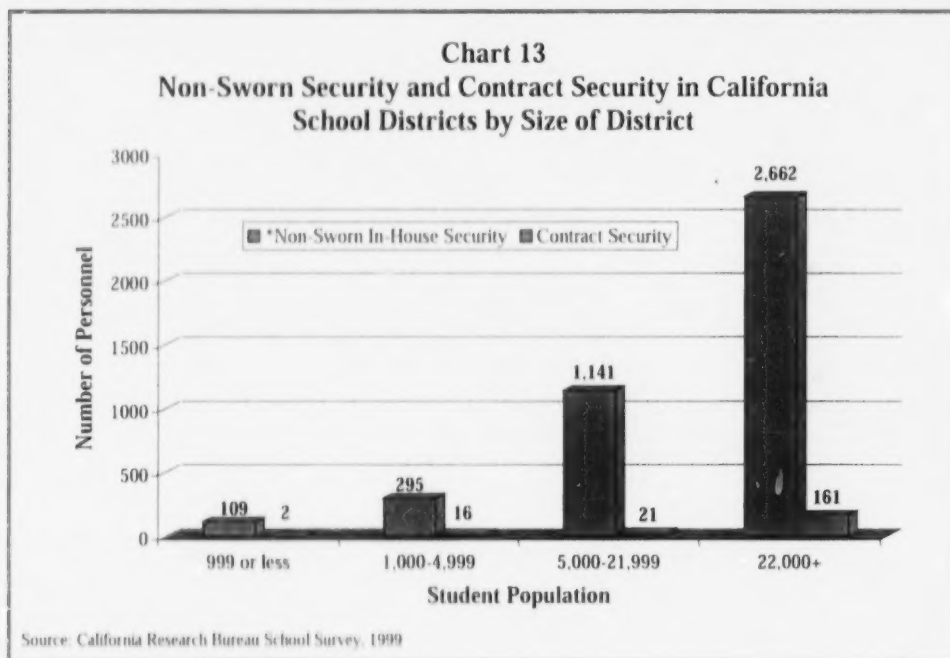


A number of districts use a combination of staffing options. For example, some schools have non-sworn in-house security that is supplemented with municipal police officers/SROs. Other districts use non-sworn in-house security for daily duties and use contract security for special purposes, such as securing transportation depots or buildings used at night. This is a reasonable division of labor. The municipal police/SROs can focus their efforts on enforcing and investigating criminal offenses, and on classroom instruction and student counseling. Meanwhile, in-house security personnel can conduct preventive patrols, supervise common areas, and conduct security assessments.

Non-Sworn Contract Security and in-House Security

According to the CRB survey, non-sworn security personnel are by far the largest security presence on school campuses across the state. Nearly 4,097 non-sworn security personnel are employed or contracted for by responding school districts statewide, projected to nearly 13,000 statewide (see Chart 13). About half of these personnel perform less than full-time security-related work.

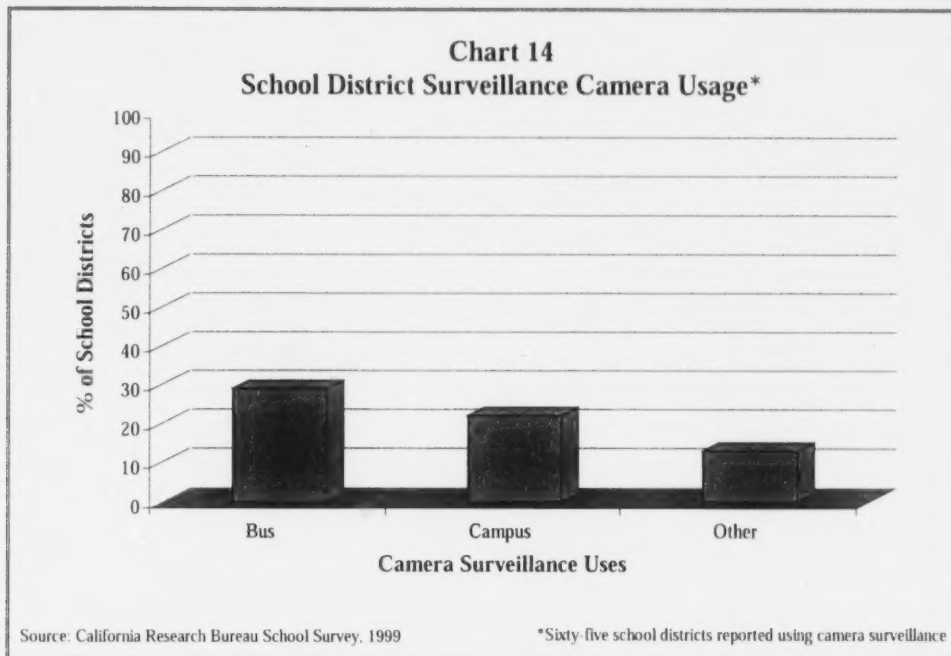
Duties for many non-sworn school security and contract security personnel vary from district to district and, in many cases, from school to school within the same district. Depending on their level of training (see training standards discussion below), non-sworn school security personnel may have limited arrest powers and authority to carry firearms. Contract security personnel usually receive relatively low pay (averaging about \$8.00 per hour for part-time work to \$12.00 per hour for full-time work). They also have a high turnover rate, which can lead to inconsistency in enforcing security measures.



Security Search Technologies

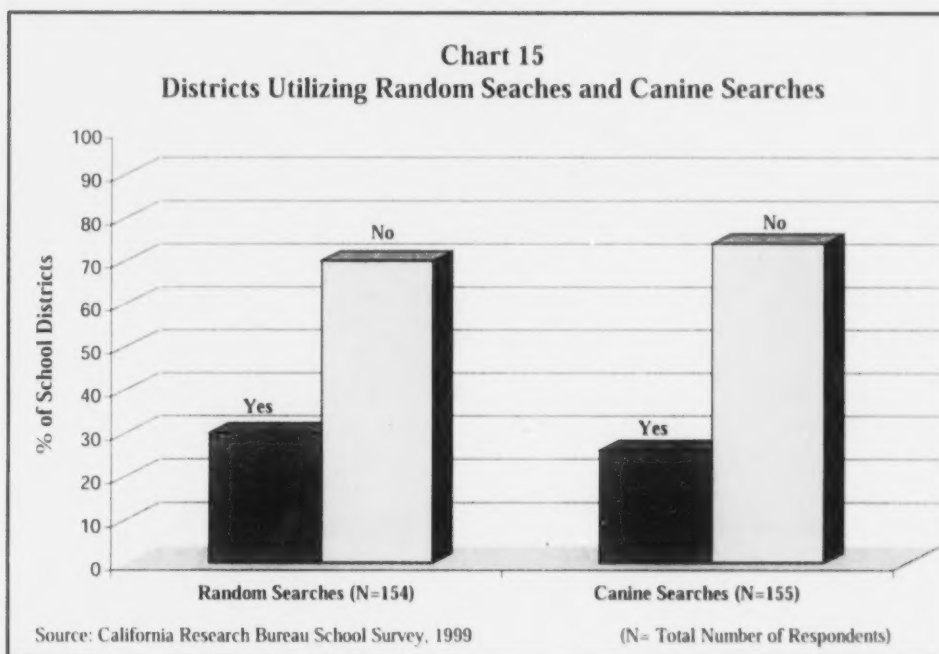
In 1981, special lighting and building alarms were highly regarded by many school districts as sound approaches to crime prevention. Today, closed circuit video surveillance cameras (CCTV) are the preferred physical security measures used in school districts. According to the CRB school survey:

- 29 percent of school districts use CCTV cameras on school buses;
- 22 percent of the districts place CCTV cameras on campuses; and
- 13 percent use CCTV cameras to monitor other school property.



This is an impressive increase from 1996, when a CRB study found that only a few school districts in California had placed CCTV surveillance cameras on campus.³¹ School districts across the country began using CCTV surveillance systems in the mid-1990s before the recent wave of tragic school shootings. Some district administrators now believe that CCTV cameras are an essential part of crime prevention in schools.³² When asked whether an effective CCTV surveillance system could have prevented the Columbine killings, a Huntsville, Alabama school district official said "probably not, but it could have minimized the damage."³³

Increasingly, school districts are employing random student searches for weapons and drugs, especially in middle and high schools. A number of large school districts use hand-held metal detectors before and during the school day, and at after-school events. Many school districts also use canines to search for drugs and weapons (see Chart 15 below). Searches are usually conducted randomly and/or when there is a suspicion that drugs or weapons are on campus. Trained dogs check lockers, rest rooms, and other common areas of school buildings. Canines are also used in elementary schools (K-6) as part of the "Just Say No to Drugs" program.



The use of dogs to detect drugs at schools may increase over the next few years. According to Ronald Stephens, Executive Director, National School Safety Center, "If we're going to require kids to attend school, then we ought to be required to provide safe schools, and canine searches are an important part of doing that." Some members of the education community and civil liberty advocates are concerned that the use of canine searches on school campuses is an intrusion in a place where people have a reasonable expectation of privacy. However, the courts have generally agreed that the use of dogs to sniff objects (as opposed to people) is not a search within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment and thus requires no heightened level of suspicion.³⁴

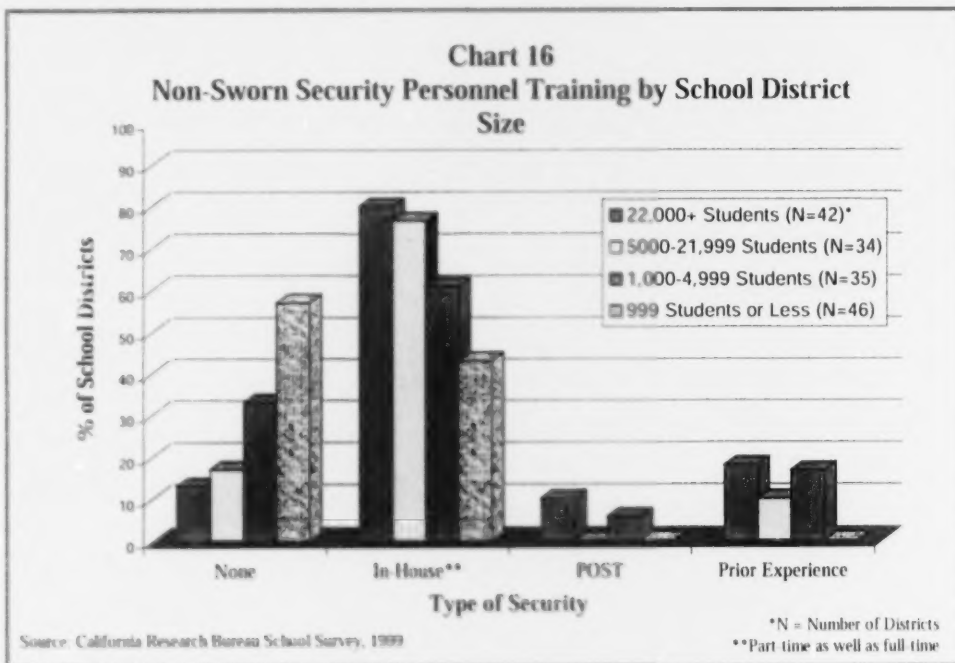
Training Requirements for School District Police and Non-Sworn Security Officers

The "gold standard" for police officers training is developed and administered by Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST). Municipal police in California are trained using POST standards. Key training elements include 17 standardized pass/fail examinations covering all aspects of criminal law and a firearm proficiency test. All school police officers hired after July 1, 1999, must complete the POST accredited course of instruction (*California Penal Code, Section 832.3*) before exercising the powers of an officer. School district police officers hired before July 1, 1999, are required to complete the POST course work by July 1, 2002. As a result, school district police officers will meet the same training and course standards required of all municipal police officers.

In contrast, the nearly 13,000 non-sworn security personnel hired by California school districts must meet a different training standard requirement. Non-sworn security personnel who work more than 20 hours per week on security-related duties are required to complete 24 hours of security and safety training developed by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Security and Investigative Services, by July 1, 2000 (*California Business and Professions Code*

Section 7583.45). This course work is offered through most California community college districts.

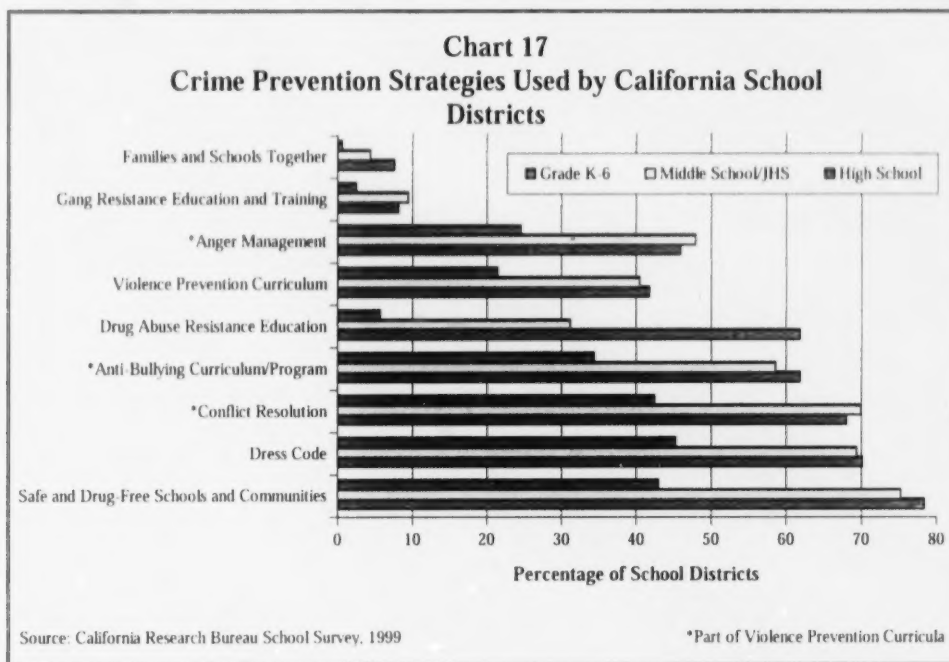
About half of the non-sworn security personnel in school districts are either employed part-time (less than 20 hours per week), or are volunteers or employees that provide some school day security or yard supervision in addition to their teaching and administrative duties. They are not required by law to receive security and safety training. Many of the smaller school districts, and some of the larger districts, do not provide their non-sworn school security personnel with any training at all. Many of these personnel are school faculty or staff who work for the school but provide security on a part-time basis.



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Violence prevention curricula are designed to help school-age youth expand their knowledge of skills that are known to be effective in changing attitudes that contribute to impulsive behavior and violence. Since 1988, nearly \$7 billion in public funds have been directed at supporting a wide range of student, teacher, parental and community programs aimed at preventing violence in and around schools. However, much of what is known about violence prevention programs is anecdotal. Only recently, in federal FY 1998/99, has the U.S. Department of Education changed guidelines to improve program accountability. No long-term evaluations have been conducted on the effectiveness of violence prevention curricula in reducing violence and drug abuse among school-age children. "We are wasting money on programs that have been demonstrated not to work," contends Delbert Elliott, Director of the University of Colorado Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. The *Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994* (see discussion on page 9) in particular has attracted a great deal of attention for its lack of accountability. The program simply "mails out checks" without holding anyone accountable, according to federal "Drug Czar," General Barry McCaffery in a *Los Angeles Times* interview.

In California, school districts utilize violence prevention curricula including: conflict resolution, peer mediation, life skills training, anger management, "peace building," "teens-on-target," and "straight talk about risk" (discussed in more detail below). Although these curricula vary in style and intensity, they all share the goal of reducing violent student behavior and thereby improving the school environment. Violence prevention curricula are taught in daily to weekly sessions and may include topics such as self-control, causes and dynamics of conflict, risk factors for violence, and self-esteem. Teachers or consultants trained in a particular curriculum attempt to reinforce enforce healthy behavioral standards in the school and sometimes in the community. Chart 17 below reports the crime prevention strategies used by California schools.



Most of the 159 California school districts that responded to the CRB survey use a variety of crime prevention strategies, as shown in Chart 17. Interestingly, high schools report using significantly fewer of these crime prevention strategies. Very few school districts (and none of the largest districts) use all of these crime and drug prevention strategies. Those that do include: one high school district in Lassen County, one K-8 district in Humboldt and Tulare counties, and one K-6 district and one K-8 district in San Diego County. It is unclear why small urban and rural districts employ the broadest range of crime prevention strategies. While many crime prevention programs overlap and evaluation data are inconclusive, districts must choose what is best for their students. Cost is surely one factor, especially in large school districts with large student populations.

Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 is the most common funding program for drug prevention in schools, although evaluation studies suggest the limited effectiveness of many local programs.³⁵ This federally funded program (discussed on page 9) automatically provides formula grant funds to school districts. Districts spend the funds on a wide range of violence and drug prevention strategies.

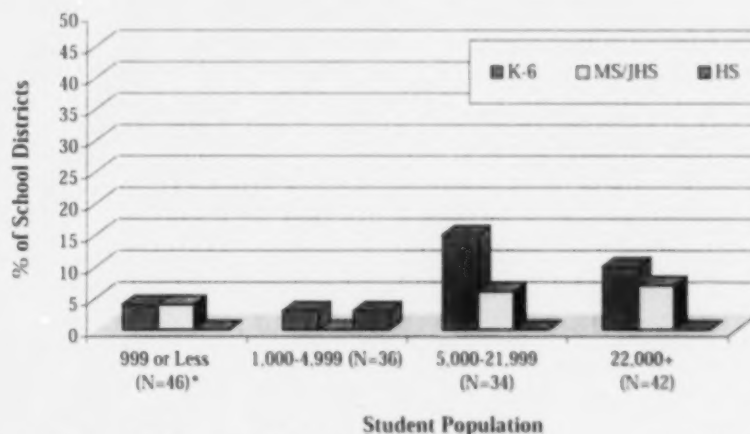
Conflict resolution programs (anger management, peer mediation, and life skills) are the principal violence prevention strategies used in California schools. Many school districts also impose a variety of dress codes that range from wearing uniforms to prohibiting certain dress and clothing items.

None of these crime and violence prevention strategies incorporate a direct performance measurement or result-oriented evaluation component that can demonstrate actual reductions in school violence. Much of the research that does exist is anecdotal, resulting from student self-assessment surveys.³⁶ According to the *California Safe Schools Assessment* report, rates of drug and alcohol offenses and battery and assault crime rates in California schools have decreased less than national rates over the last three years. Thus it is difficult to determine if California violence prevention programs have had any impact on reducing violence or conflict between students. Recent national evaluations also suggest that many anti-drug programs are ineffective. In particular, the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program appears to not have reduced drug use among students who completed the curricula, compared to those students who do not (see page 29 for discussion of the DARE program).

FAST

This early intervention program is designed for children ages 4 to 14. It attempts to address the urgent social problems of youth violence and chronic juvenile delinquency by building and enhancing youth relationships with their families, peers, teachers, school staff, and other members of the community. The theory is that these relationships form a safety net of multifaceted protective factors for young, at-risk children that can help them to succeed at home, in school, and in the community. The goal is to help them avoid becoming delinquent, violent, or addicted.

Chart 18
Families and Schools Together (FAST) by School District Size
and School Type



Source: California Research Bureau School Survey, 1999

*N = Number of Districts

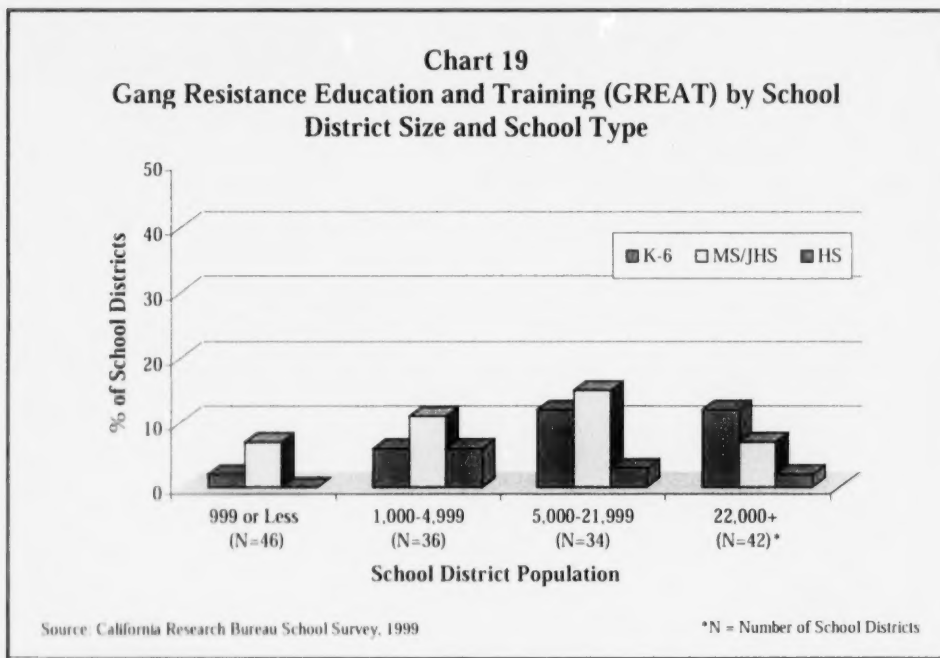
Prevention activities seek to enhance family functioning, reduce alcohol and drug abuse, and decrease the family stress experienced from daily life. The program begins with outreach in which parent-professional partners visit the homes of isolated at-risk parents who are identified by school personnel. At-risk parents are invited into the program, ten families at a time. The cost per family is approximately \$1,200 for 86 hours of service over 30 sessions spanning two years. The cost per school to serve about 30 families is \$36,000 per year. The program is funded in California through the Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention. As shown in Chart 18, the number of families in the program is relatively small.

Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.).

This brief (9-week) instructional program is taught to primarily to middle and elementary school students by a trained, uniformed law enforcement officer. The format is similar to *DARE*. The program teaches students about the impact of crime on its victims and the community; discusses cultural differences; teaches conflict resolution skills (including how to meet basic social needs without joining a gang); and stresses responsibility to the school and the neighborhood. The program ends in a lesson in which the students are taught the importance of goal setting. The program is a less structured and intensive relative to other gang resistance programs that are directed at higher-risk groups.

The CRB survey found that school districts in California do not utilize this program to any significant degree. Despite its limited use by California school districts, evaluation results of a national survey in 11 sites found that students completing the program had more pro-social attitudes and lower rates of some types of delinquent behavior than did students in

comparison groups.³⁷ When used in conjunction with dress code requirements or restrictions on certain attire, gang resistance can be effective.

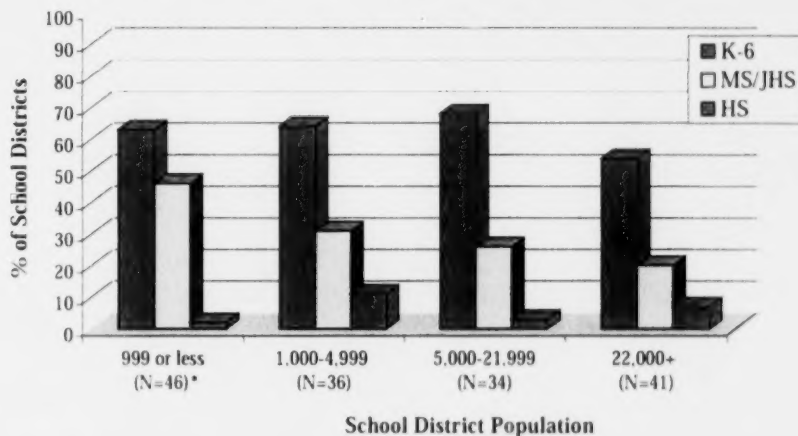


Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)

This well known program is taught by uniformed law enforcement officers. It was developed by the Los Angeles Police Department in 1983, and has since spread nationwide. Its core curriculum focuses on teaching pupils the skills needed to recognize and resist social pressures to use drugs. It contains lessons about drugs and their consequences, decision-making skills, self-esteem, and alternatives to drugs. Teaching techniques include lectures, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, audiovisual materials, workbook exercises, and role-playing.

In California, as shown in Chart 20, *DARE* is mainly popular in elementary schools, where it is taught in half of California's school districts.

Chart 20
Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) by School District
Size and Type of School



Source: California Research Bureau School Survey, 1999

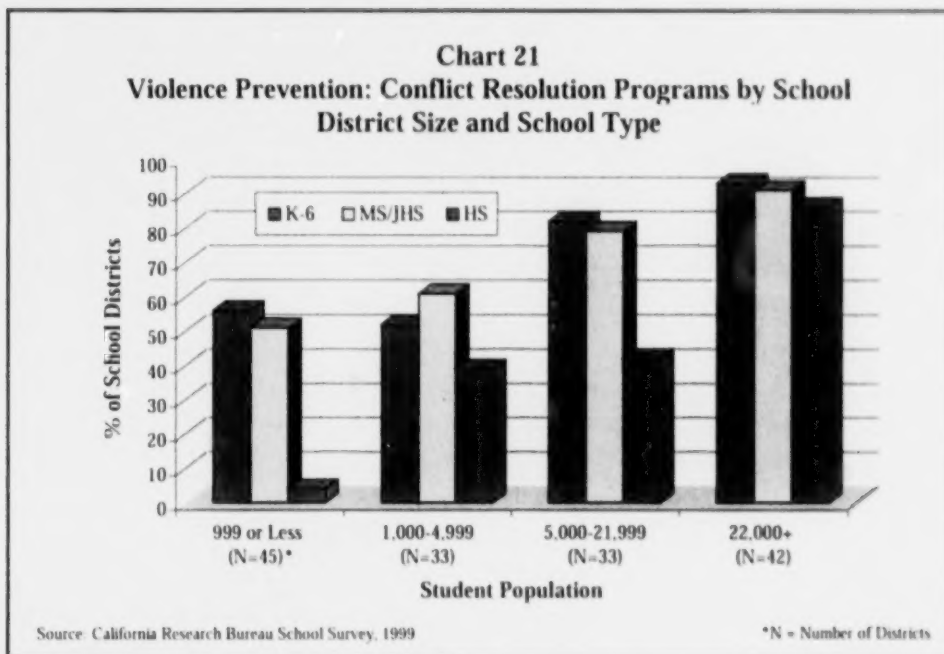
*N = Number of Districts

The *DARE* programs have come under much scrutiny recently. Many *DARE* program evaluations conducted across the country have not found that the program has much success in reducing drug use among youth.³⁸ Researchers conclude in a U.S. Department of Justice report that the *DARE* core curriculum will not reduce substance use among students. The report recommends that any further reliance on *DARE* as a drug prevention strategy should be viewed as a part of a more comprehensive program using social learning and life learning skills.³⁹ Since 1991, the U.S. Department of Justice has funded over \$4 billion for local drug prevention programs. Yet too many school districts use ineffective drug prevention programs, according to recent evaluations.⁴⁰

Conflict Resolution Programs

"Conflict resolution" is the cornerstone of violence prevention curricula. Conflict resolution programs are used extensively in California's 50 largest school districts. However very few high schools in small districts, and less than 40 percent of high schools in medium-sized districts, offer conflict resolution programs (see Chart 21 below). Small school district administrators interviewed for this survey indicate that they do not use conflict resolution and violence prevention programs because they lack the resources and do not have the grant writing expertise to secure program grants.

The programs teach communication skills and creative thinking to help students to prevent, manage, and peacefully resolve conflicts. The underling premise is that conflict is a normal, natural phenomenon. Conflict resolution processes include negotiation (between two parties without a facilitator), mediation (involving a third-party process facilitator), and consensus decision-making (facilitated group problem solving). All three curricula are designed for all levels of K-12 school.



A recent survey conducted by the California State Auditor found that less than half of the middle schools and high schools that use conflict resolution programs train their faculty and staff and only a fraction of schools train parents. The same study found that in schools where faculty and staff receive conflict resolution training, school principals believe their schools are better prepared to handle conflict than in schools where faculty and staff are not trained.⁴¹

Research on the effectiveness of conflict resolution programs within schools has been ongoing since the 1970s. Most of it has focused on mediations programs (involving a third-party process facilitator), which are more common. Very few studies, however, have used a control group to compare outcomes with students not enrolled in conflict resolution programs. The most successful findings are from a 1995 national evaluation, which found that students trained in conflict resolution using mediation were better able to manage a controlled conflict without resorting to physical confrontation than students who did not receive the training.⁴² In 1995, 70 percent of the California school districts using conflict resolution curricula reported that incidences of suspension were reduced and that referrals to principals decreased 42 percent.⁴³

In general, California school districts do not evaluate the effectiveness of their conflict resolution programs. They have not constructed specific outcome measurements tied to the performance of the students in the program, nor is there follow-up research of the students who have successfully completed the program. Thus there is no program-related data by which to compare schools that use conflict resolution curricula, against those that do not, nor is there data to compare with statewide school crime rates such as battery and assault on campus.

Peer Mediation Programs

In this form of conflict resolution, students involved in a conflict agree to have a trained peer mediator help them resolve their dispute. Peer mediators are fellow students trained in special mediation skills including problem solving, active listening, communicating, identifying points of agreement, and maintaining confidentiality and a non-judgmental stance. About 10,000 schools and community groups in the U.S. are using peer mediation, according to Margery Baker, executive director of the National Institute for Dispute Resolution. Trained peer mediators help youth to examine their disagreement and develop a mutually acceptable solution. The process is designed to be democratic and void of blame. Young people benefit from an opportunity to contribute to positive solutions in their school environment while learning skills to resolve conflict in their own lives.

Teens are often willing to learn from their peers. Sixty-one percent of 11-17 year olds would trust advice from someone who had actually experienced a problem, such as a former drug addict, a gang member or a teen mother, according Carole Close, who operates a peer mediation center for the Cleveland School District in Ohio.⁴⁴ However, much of the research on peer mediation is anecdotal. Few studies examine the rates of suspension, fights or confrontational incidents in schools to see if they decrease with the program.

Life Skills Training

This three-year primary prevention program targets 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students to discourage the use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. The curriculum includes 15 lessons over a year period taught in school by regular classroom teachers, with booster sessions provided in the second year (ten classes) and third year (five classes). Three basic program components include:

- Personal self-management (decision-making and problem-solving, self-control skills for coping with anxiety and self-improvement skills);
- Social skills enhancement (communication and general social skills); and
- Drug-related information designed to improve knowledge and affect attitudes about drug use and peer pressure.

Life skills training has been effective at reducing alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana use among young people in the short term but not the long term. Research finds that the effects of decreased student tobacco and alcohol use are not sustained through the end of high school.⁴⁵

Peace Building Programs

This program integrates conflict resolution into the curricula and daily management of the classroom, using instructional methods of cooperative learning and "academic controversy." The Educators for Social Responsibility curriculum, *Making Choices about Conflict, Security, and Peacemaking*, shows teachers how to integrate conflict resolution

into the curriculum, classroom management, and discipline practices. It emphasizes opportunities to practice cooperation, appreciation of diversity, and caring and effective communication. Studies on the program's effectiveness found that discipline problems requiring teacher management decreased by approximately 80 percent, and referrals to the principal were reduced to zero.⁴⁶

Anger Management Programs

The courses are designed for teachers, students, and parents to help them deal with their anger and to reinforce positive life skills, usually in a shared environment. Most school-based anger management curricula draw upon several theories about social learning and cognitive behavior. They utilize a variety of mechanisms to teach behavioral change including tutored video instruction, observation, guided practice and successful experience, role-playing, modeling, and performance feedback. Students have the opportunity to self-assess their abilities to manage their anger. It usually takes two full days of training for teachers to become classroom facilitators. Some skill courses last two weeks, others as long as one semester.

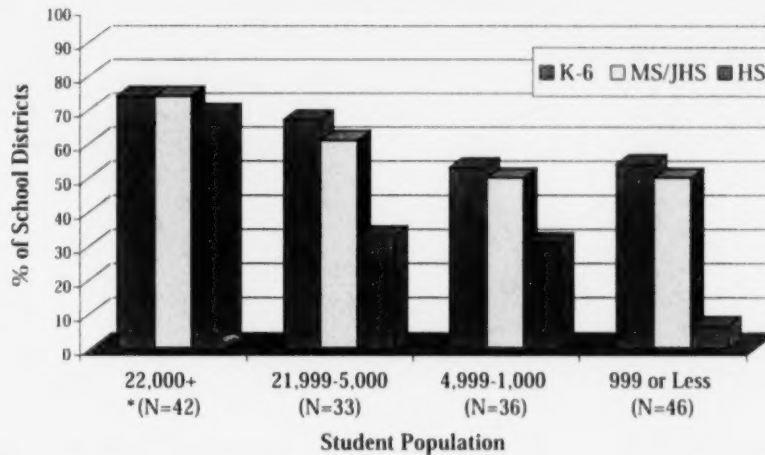
Bullying Prevention Programs

An estimated nine out of ten junior high and high school students have witnessed bullying, and eight out of ten have been bullied during their school careers.⁴⁷ Bullying programs seek to increase awareness of the problem, to achieve active involvement on the part of teachers and parents, to develop clear rules against bullying behavior, and to provide support and protection for the victims of bullying. Key elements include conflict resolution training for staff members, social skills building for victims, positive leadership skills training for bullies, intervention techniques for bystanders, and the presence of parental support. Intervention models can be used on a school-wide classroom, or at the individual level.

In Bergen, Norway, the frequency of bullying/victim problems decreased by more than 50 percent two years after the program began. These results applied to both boys and girls and to students across all the grades studied. Recent U.S. research found the same 50 percent reduction in bullying, as well as a reduction in antisocial behavior (theft, vandalism, and truancy), and an improvement in school climate.⁴⁸

Although bullying occurs at all levels of grade school, the CRB school survey finds that California high schools in smaller districts generally do not offer bullying programs (Chart 22).

Chart 22
Violence Prevention: Anti-Bullying Programs by School District Size and School Type



Source: California Research Bureau School Survey, 1999

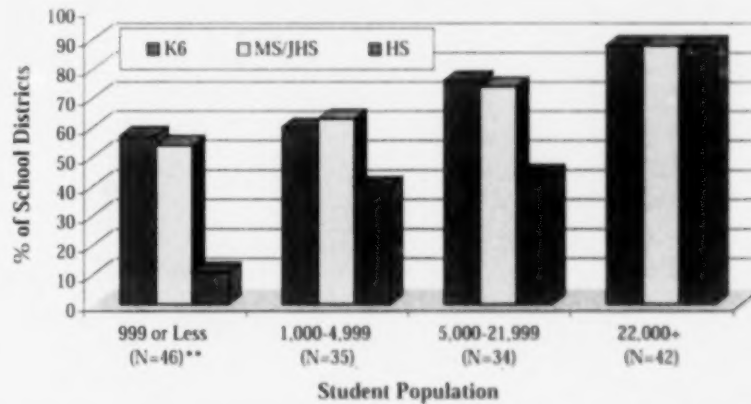
*N = Number of Districts

Dress Codes

Gang-related apparel has been a concern for many years. In 1993, the Legislature enacted a law giving school boards the authority to adopt reasonable dress code regulations (*Education Code, Section 35183*). Since then, school dress codes targeting gang attire have been challenged in courts under the First Amendment, but school districts have prevailed. The California School Boards Association recommends a "reasonable dress code" regulation as the first step for schools that wish to develop a dress code. Key elements include securing parental support at the beginning of the process, protecting religious expression, selecting either a voluntary or mandatory uniform policy with an "opt out" provision, providing an assistance plan for poor students, and treating uniforms as part of an overall safety program. In the Long Beach School District, the crime rate in middle schools dropped by 36 percent between 1993 and 1995 after the introduction of the dress code.⁴⁹

The CRB survey found that dress codes, particularly anti-gang-color dress codes, are required in most large California school districts, as shown in Chart 23. High schools in small school districts are the least likely to enforce a dress code requirement.

Chart 23
Dress Code Requirements* by School District Size and
School Type



Source: California Research Bureau School Survey, 1999

*Includes Uniform Dress Codes and Restrictive Dress

**N = Number of Districts

LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OPTIONS

While not necessarily the recommendation of the California Research Bureau, the author or the Legislative members requesting this report, the following options reflect the broad range of research on the subject.

Violence Prevention Planning and Curricula

School districts in California generally respond to school violence in two distinct ways. The most common approach is through *violence prevention* curricula whereby individual one-on-one violence and aggressive behavior is addressed through counseling, life skills building, peer mediation and conflict resolution. The second approach is to make it physically difficult for terrorist acts to occur on school campuses by using a combination of highly visible security personnel along with detection technologies such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras, and more conventional security such as canine searches, locks, and metal bars.

Although school safety plans are required by state law (*Education Code Section 35294 et al.*), that requirement expires on January 1, 2000. The Legislature has passed legislation (*SB 334*) to extend the requirement.

Very few school safety plans address how to respond to a random act of terrorist violence (see pages 8 and 15). Many school safety plans currently address only the limited range of issues required by state law (reporting school crime, emergency disaster procedures, child abuse reporting, school staff notification of student expulsion, sexual harassment policy and dress code). Yet given recent horrifying examples, such as Littleton, schools probably need to better meet public concerns.

- The Legislature could require that school safety and security plans include crisis planning and management. Again, such proposals are currently under consideration.
- Training for a terrorist action might also be beneficial. For example, Travis Unified School District recently conducted such an exercise with the participation of the Air Force. Berkeley High School conducted a similar exercise with local police, fire, and paramedic personnel.

The CRB school survey finds that a significant number of school districts are using violence prevention programming and curricula as a proactive, risk reduction approach to school violence (see pages 27 and 28).

- Schools need to carefully consider their security needs, build on data drawn from students and the community, and incorporate those needs into a school safety plan that specifies programs and expected outcomes (see page 7). Not all school districts are meeting these basic requirements for effective violence prevention. Current law and legislative proposals do not envision that school safety plans include all of these components, for example a security risk assessment and improved data collection and analysis.

- Currently school districts rely on a variety of curricula and programs, in part driven by federal and state funding sources. Evaluation research suggests wide variations in program effectiveness (see pages 28, 31, and 32). The Legislature could require districts to take this research into account when formulating school plans and deciding on school safety programs. The Department of Education could compile and disseminate research findings.
- There is some evidence that effective school violence prevention curricula include students in the planning and implementation process (see page 33). The Legislature could require school districts to include students in planning and implementation.
- School safety is in part a question of perception (see pages 5 and 6). In order to develop a community consensus and decrease security concerns, schools could survey parents and students about their perceptions and improve communication about safety policies. This information could be used to revise school safety plans. The Department of Education and the Department of Justice could partner to develop a model survey assessment form. The Legislature could create a special funding mechanism.
- The Legislature could authorize a one-time funding measure so that a school safety assessment could be conducted by a qualified security expert for every school in the state. The infusion of expert analysis might improve the implementation of school safety plans and enable a cost-effective selection of programs and security technologies. School safety measures might include the use of telephones in each classroom, cell phones for each school, breathalyzers in each high school, and surveillance cameras in school areas that are security risks (see page 7).
- Schools could streamline existing safety procedures into one manual or document. This manual could be used to inform volunteers and school staff.

Involvement of the Judiciary

According to CRB interviews, some judges believe that their expertise and legal responsibility for decisions involving at-risk children and their families could be better integrated into school violence prevention policy. At-risk students and their families interact with the courts, and that information could be shared with schools (see page 15). Judges could offer important insight and ideas towards the development of school safety plans. Perhaps the Legislature could formally require judicial participation in the planning process.

- The Attorney General recently formed a School Violence Prevention Task Force to create a model state school safety and security plan. Members of the Task Force include the Attorney General, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Legislative members from the Assembly and Senate. The Judiciary Council could request the appointment of a liaison to the Attorney General's Task Force.

- The Administration could work with courts to initiate a judicial program in schools whereby judges could take sabbaticals to participate in school mentoring and other educational services that would improve campus safety and reduce youth crime, violence, and drug abuse.

Data

In California, a number of state and county agencies including the juvenile and family courts and child welfare systems have separate data collection systems and overlapping responsibilities in matters involving school-age children. These systems are not coordinated to avoid duplication nor is the information used to improve violence prevention services for the individual child (see page 15).

- The Administration could direct the appropriate state agencies to partner with county and school officials to develop a plan to better collect and integrate data to serve these at-risk students.

As a result of confidentiality laws, schools generally do not know if a child transferring or entering a school for the first time has been abused or is at-risk due to family problems. Troubled families and their children might be involved in the juvenile court, dependency hearings, civil cases (divorce) and criminal cases (domestic violence). Each court proceeding can take place in isolation from the others, inhibiting the courts (and schools) from recognizing and seeking to prevent potential serious problems.

- The courts and county child welfare services could jointly plan and develop family-centered data systems with the goal of evaluating services to be better directed to these troubled families. This effort may require some state funding and direction. The information could be shared with school officials so that violence prevention services could be targeted for at-risk youth in school.

Better School Crime Prevention Program Evaluations

Many school-based violence prevention programs lack evaluation or outcome data. For example, the state has funded pilot programs in the past yet not documented outcome to learn what worked and what did not. Recent studies suggest that widely used programs, for example DARE, are not effective in reducing drug use, a primary contributor to juvenile violence (see page 31). An empirical database could offer a better gauge of what works, or does not work, in curbing school violence and drug-use.

- The Legislature could require the appointment of an expert task force that would formulate approaches to directly evaluate the performance of programs used by school districts to reduce violence and crime. Task force members might include academic specialists, program administrators, school district officials, and representatives of the Department of Education. The goal of the task force would be to establish a model evaluation process, including data-oriented audits, self-reporting surveys, and tracking systems to assess student and school outcomes. Evaluations would answer the question, "What changed because of the intervention?" The information would be

shared with school districts so they could more cost-effectively spend their limited resources (see page 32).

Grant Funding for School Districts

District administrators in small school districts interviewed for this survey indicate that they do not use conflict resolution and violence prevention programs because they lack the resources and do not have the grant writing expertise to secure program grants. For example, the *Safe and Drug Free Schools Act* is a federal formula grant fund that has attracted a great deal of attention for its lack of outcome-based accountability. Some of the smallest school districts in the state receive less than a \$100 annually from this fund (see page 9). There are also a number of demonstration grant funds available to school districts for violence prevention. Many smaller school districts (with a student population of 5,000 or less) do not have the resources or the ability to match federal and state grant funding for violence and crime prevention programs. The shortfall is particularly severe for high schools in small districts, many of which lack the range of violence prevention programs offered in larger school districts (see Chart 17, page 27).

- The Legislature and the Governor could require the Department of Education and the Office of Criminal Justice Planning to offer grant writing assistance to smaller school districts so as to acquire a fair share of discretionary grant funds.
- Small school districts may need financial assistance to meet federal requirements for matching funds for school safety grant programs. The Legislature could create a "challenge grant" program to fund grant matches for smaller and at-risk school districts (see pages 9 and 10).
- The Department of Education could evaluate the security needs of small districts and recommend a targeted funding program to the Legislature.

Crisis Management

The CRB study finds that many districts do not have a crisis management plan (see page 15). Crisis response is an important component of violence prevention planning. At a minimum, a crisis management plan should include a contingency plan to intervene during a crisis and to respond in the aftermath of a tragedy. Having a school response team that knows what to do during a crisis is a critical component of the crisis management plan.

- Upgrading the training of non-security school personnel is one mechanism to improve crisis response. Basic violence prevention curricula and violence prevention training for staff and volunteers are currently not required as components of a school safety plan, but could be.
- Another issue revolves around training for a crisis situation. One option might be to stage a mock crisis exercise when students are not in school. Travis and Berkeley Unified School Districts, for example, undertook such an exercise recently during the summer break.

- The Legislature could require each school principal to appoint a team of school staff, law enforcement officials, and health care officials to serve as a crisis response team at the beginning of each school year.
- School district police officers or municipal police officers could train members of the response team on how to respond to a crisis (violent incidents, suicides and natural disasters) as an organized unit. A communication system among school staff, police, hospitals, mental health professionals, parents, and elected officials could support the crisis response teams.

School Police and Staff Security Training and Qualifications

A substantial number of the estimated 13,000 non-sworn security personnel who provide part-time security at K-12 school campuses are not required to be trained (see pages 25 and 26). By July 2002, all school district police will have completed a POST training course that meets the standards currently required of municipal police officers. Non-sworn security personnel who work over 20 hours a week will meet training requirements established by the Department of Consumer Affairs. Many of these personnel are faculty members and other school employees whose primary job is to teach and perform other school-related work. Others are part-time employees employed or contracted for security purposes. Their preparedness to respond to a potentially violent event is arguably inadequate.

- The Legislature could require the Department of Education and the Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Securities and Investigations to develop minimum training requirements for part-time (under 20 hours) school security, school personnel, and volunteers. School districts or municipal police officers could offer the training several times a year.

School districts that employ municipal police officers under the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant program could face a loss of funding after 2001 (see page 21). This would have a major impact on how security is provided on California school districts campuses.

- If Congress does not authorize continued funding of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, the Legislature and the Administration could consider establishing a state grant program to fully or partially fund municipal police officers hired under the aforementioned act. Priority funding could be given to schools districts that previously employed municipal police officers.

**APPENDIX A:
SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY SURVEY**

School Safety and Security Survey

Goals

- Understand the priorities which school districts place on security.
- Assess the security resources of school districts, including the number and type of personnel.
- Identify the type and number of crime prevention strategies used by school districts.

Methodology and Content

The development of the survey involved a number of steps, including clarifying research goals, defining terminology, and designing and constructing the survey instrument. Meetings were held with statewide school safety administrators and professional organizations to seek their input in refining the survey and their cooperation in distributing it. The survey instrument was sent to all school district superintendents in a representative sample of California school districts. Finally, on-site follow-up interviews and telephone calls were conducted with school district administrators and line staff to clarify responses and to seek additional information.

In general, the survey respondents were asked to do the following:

- Describe the school district's level of compliance in development of safe school plans, including participation of parents, community groups and students.
- Indicate the kinds of crime prevention programs and strategies used in the district and in individual schools.
- List the number of school district police, municipal police, contract security and/or in-house security providing security on school district campuses.
- Identify the types of equipment school district police carry on school district campuses.
- Answer a series of formatted questions relating to workload, staffing, and training of school district police and security personnel.
- Specify the amount and percentage of school district budgets dedicated to security.

Surveys were sent out to a statewide sample of 240 school districts. The school districts in the sample were divided into four groups: the 50 largest districts and three equal groups based on district size:

- The 50 largest school districts with a student population of more than 22,000.
- School districts with a student population of 5,000 to 21,999.
- School districts with a student population of 1,000 to 4,999.
- School districts with a student population of 1,000 or less.

Surveys were returned by 158 of the 240 school districts in the sample (representing 43 percent of the state's K-12 student population, or 2,705,400 out of 5,710,075 students). Forty-two of the 50 largest school districts representing 91 percent of the student population of those districts responded to the survey. Fifteen percent of the school districts

with 5,000 - 21,999 students responded, 12 percent of the school districts with 1,000 - 4,999 students responded, and only 10 percent of the smallest school districts responded.

School Safety and Security Survey

Part I School Safety Programs

1. Has each school in your district completed their *Comprehensive School Safety Plan*, as required by law (*Chapter 737, Statutes of 1997*)

Yes (Please indicate the number of schools) _____

No (Please indicate the number of schools) _____

- 1A. If yes, please indicate below the number and grade-level of schools in your district that have evaluated and amended their safety plans? (If evaluations have been completed, please return copies with this survey.)

K-6 _____ JHS _____ HS _____

2. Please indicate which of the following crime/violence prevention *strategies* schools in your district use and the grade-level of the school where the program occurs (K-6 grade, junior high/middle school- including grades 7th and 8th or grades 7th through 9th, and high school).*

_____ Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC)	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.)	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.)	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Families and Schools Together (F.A.S.T.)	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Violence prevention curricula	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ School norms against violence, bullying, and aggression	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Dress code	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Personal and social skills training for students:	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Anger management	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Peace building	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Social problem solving	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Conflict resolution/management	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Social resistance (i.e. just say no, etc.)	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____
_____ Other, please describe. _____	K-6 _____	JHS _____	HS _____

3. Do *crime/violence* prevention strategies used by schools in your district include participation from parents, community groups or students in the decision-making process?

Yes _____ (If yes, please indicate below the number and grade-level school where these groups participated.)

*For school districts that do not have middle or junior high schools, please use the K-6 elementary and high school categories.

Parents
Community Groups
Students

K-6 ___ JHS ___ HS ___
K-6 ___ JHS ___ HS ___
K-6 ___ JHS ___ HS ___

No ___ If no, why not? _____

Part II School Safety Services

A. Peace Officer Personnel

1. Please indicate the number of school district employed *police officers* or *contracted police officers*?

Number of district employed police officers _____

Number of non-district (Municipal Police/County Sheriff) police officers
contracted to work in the school district _____

2. Do your *district police officers* participate in the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) program (District officers have full academy training and the district receives reimbursement from P.O.S.T.)?

Yes _____

No _____

3. Do the *district police officers* carry any of the following equipment?

_____ Firearm
_____ Chemical spray (Mace, pepper, etc.)
_____ Baton (Night stick)
_____ Handcuffs

4. Do your *district police officers* wear *distinctive uniforms*?

Yes _____

No _____

5. Please indicate the hours of operation for your district *police officers*.

_____ 24 hours a day, 5 days per week
_____ Daytime only
_____ "After hours" only
_____ On campus during the school day only

6. Who in your school district do *police officers* report to?

- ☐ School district police chief
- ☐ Central office administrator (Asst. Supt., Director, Supt., etc.)
- ☐ Site administrator (e.g. Principal)
- ☐ Site administrator's designee
- ☐ Other (Please identify who) _____

7. Do your *district police officers* operate district owned police vehicles with red lights, sirens, etc.?

- Yes ☐
No ☐

8. Please indicate which of the following services are performed by your *district police officers*?

- ☐ Make arrests
- ☐ Conduct investigations
- ☐ Submit investigations to the county district attorney for prosecution
- ☐ Obtain search warrants, or arrest warrants
- ☐ Submit investigations to the juvenile court for prosecution
- ☐ Unlock doors
- ☐ Respond to alarms

B. Non-Sworn Security Personnel

1. Please indicate the number of *in-house* or *proprietary campus supervisors, proctors, noon duty assistants, and/or security personnel* employed by the district to provide security?

2. Please indicate the number of *contract security personnel* (Non district employees) employed by your school district? _____

3. Please indicate the hours of operation for your *security personnel*.

- ☐ 24 hours a day, 5 days per week
- ☐ Daytime only
- ☐ "After hours" only
- ☐ On campus during the school day only

4. Please indicate the training provided for your *security personnel* listed in #1 above

- ☐ None
- ☐ POST Training (number of hours) _____

_____ In-house, in service only (please indicate the type and length of training)

_____ Prior law enforcement/security training (please indicate the type and length of training)

5. Do the *security personnel* in your school district carry any of the following equipment?

_____ Firearm
_____ Chemical spray (Mace, pepper, etc)
_____ Baton (Night stick)
_____ Handcuffs

6. Please indicate if the *security personnel* in your school district wear a *distinctive uniform*?

_____ None
_____ T-shirt/wind breaker
_____ Police/sheriff type uniform

7. Who in your school district do *security personnel* report to?

_____ District police chief
_____ Central office administrator (Asst. Supt., Director, Supt., etc.)
_____ Site administrator (e.g. Principal)
_____ Site administrator's designee
_____ Other (Please identify who) _____

8. Do your district *security personnel* operate district owned vehicles with distinctive markings, including electric carts, pickups, etc.?

_____ Yes
_____ No

9. Does your school district use community volunteers to assist your *security or police personnel* to monitor school campuses?

Yes (Please indicate the time of day) _____
No _____

10. Are your school district *security personnel* permitted to do any of the following tasks?

_____ Search students in the absence of a certified administrator
_____ Arrest persons and summon police

- _____ Interview students suspected of committing a crime or rule violation
11. What is your school district's annual *safety services budget* (Please include personnel, equipment, and administrative costs)? _____
12. What percentage of your *annual school district budget* is dedicated to safety/security services? _____
13. Does your *school district* use any of the following equipment?
- _____ Walk through metal detectors
_____ Hand held metal detectors
_____ Surveillance cameras
_____ "Panic" alarms
_____ None of the above
14. Does your school district use *metal detectors* for any of the following purposes?
- _____ To check students entering campus in the beginning of the school day.
_____ To check students entering campus after lunch.
_____ To check students and other persons attending school-related events.
_____ Other uses. Please explain. _____

15. Does your school district conduct *random searches* for drugs, alcohol or weapons?
- _____ Yes
_____ No
16. Does your school district use *dogs* to detect drugs?
- _____ Yes
_____ No
17. Does your school district use *video surveillance cameras* in any of the following areas or locations?
- _____ School buses
_____ Maintenance yards
_____ Campus entrances and exits
_____ Hallways
_____ Stairwells
_____ Libraries
_____ Parking lots
_____ Cafeteria

Campus quad areas

_____ High risk areas (Areas of poor lighting, swimming pools, where money is kept, labs)

_____ Other areas (please specify) _____

18. Who is responsible for monitoring your school district *video surveillance* system?

_____ Personnel employed by the school district

_____ Non-district contract personnel (Private patrol operators etc.)

_____ Municipal/county police personnel

_____ Community volunteers

19. Does a designated person on a regular, current action basis regularly review the *videotapes*?

_____ Yes

_____ No

20. Are the *videotapes* only reviewed after an incident occurs?

_____ Yes

_____ No

21. How effective are your *school district's* safety measures?

_____ Very effective-our school district is safe with very few incidents.

_____ Effective-our school district is safe with incidents occurring a few times a Week.

_____ Ineffective-our school district is unsafe with incidents occurring on a frequent basis.

22. Please provide any additional comments below.

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